

# focus on



Cancer  
**Focus**  
NORTHERN IRELAND

Issue 14: Summer / Autumn 2016



**Volunteer  
for us!**  
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## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S FOREWORD



What a busy few months for Cancer Focus NI. After many years campaigning for standardised cigarette packaging, we welcomed new legislation which will safeguard many children and young people from the devastating effects of smoking and will encourage adults to stop. Working with our politicians, we have achieved major progress and we trust we can rely on their continued support to implement Cancer Focus NI's vision of a tobacco-free Northern Ireland by 2035.

We welcome our new charity partners and look forward to working with Caldwells Spar, Islandmagee, Brakes Catering and Food Supplies, Irwin's Bakery, Acheson & Glover, Dalata Hotel Group and Nandos, Boucher Road, Belfast. A special thank you to all our corporate partners who help us raise cancer awareness as well as funds to improve the lives of local people who have been affected by the disease.

We are encouraging people to share their cancer journey with us to highlight how our services have helped you or your family. This will raise awareness about the free services we offer local people in your community as well as help encourage people to fundraise for us. For more information call Derval on **028 9068 0763** or email [dervalmcverry@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:dervalmcverry@cancerfocusni.org)

We have launched our new website which is easy to navigate and contains lots of information about our services, events and how you can get involved - visit [www.cancerfocusni.org](http://www.cancerfocusni.org). Also check out our Facebook, Twitter and new Instagram pages for up-to-date information on our work and events.

Thank you to all our wonderful fundraisers and volunteers who make a huge contribution to our work. We hope to meet many new supporters over the next few months.

Wishing you all the very best,

Roisin Foster  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE



## A lasting legacy

It is very easy to keep putting off making or changing a Will. But the reality is that making, or even updating, a Will is straightforward. It will also give you



peace of mind knowing that your wishes will be carried out. Our vision is to see a day when cancer is no longer a life-threatening disease. You can be part of making our vision a reality. After you have made provision for family and friends, please consider leaving a gift in your Will to us - no matter how big or small. By leaving just 1% to Cancer Focus NI and 99% to your family, you will be making a difference. It won't cost you anything now, but your investment will make a huge impact on future generations. Gifts in Wills play such a huge part as they are invested in our local ground-breaking cancer research.

For more information call Ollie on **028 9068 0740** or email [olliegovett@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:olliegovett@cancerfocusni.org)

## Driving health messages

Over 70 people from across Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue visited our Keeping Well vans to get a free health check. We operate a fleet of Keeping Well vans (mobile drop-in units) which bring health checks and cancer awareness advice and support directly to workplaces, shopping centres, sports and community groups across NI.

The health checks include body composition, blood pressure and blood glucose checks and when appropriate, smoking cessation information. Lifestyle advice and information on the early signs and symptoms of various cancers is delivered on a one-to-one basis. To book a Keeping Well van call **028 9066 3281** or email [keepingwell@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:keepingwell@cancerfocusni.org)



Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Chief Fire Officer Dale Ashford with Sandra Gordon, Health Promotion Nurse from Cancer Focus NI.



# Building a fresh vision for cancer

We launched our Manifesto at Stormont calling on the Executive to build a fresh vision for cancer and end the complacency that accepts poorer outcomes for local people.

Among the areas of concern raised in our Manifesto are:

- Patients in NI continue to be denied access to life extending cancer drugs that are available in other parts of the UK
- Cancer waiting times have worsened, consistently failing to meet ministerial targets
- Cancer cases are projected to rise considerably - by 2035 they are set to rise by 65% among men and by 63% for women
- A number of important public health initiatives have yet to be implemented including minimum unit pricing of alcohol and setting a target date to achieve a 'Tobacco Free Northern Ireland'
- Public awareness of common signs and symptoms of cancer continues to be lower in NI than other developed countries

Roisin Foster, Chief Executive, Cancer Focus NI, said, "We have urged the NI Executive to declare a fresh vision for cancer - one that has ambitious and measurable targets and that will take the fight against cancer forward in NI. The reviewed Cancer Service Framework is not a substitute for a comprehensive vision and an overarching strategy to fight cancer."



Pictured with Roisin Foster at the launch is Tracy Martin, from Banbridge - a breast cancer survivor who lost her father, Brian Coburn, to the disease. Supported by his family, Brian was at the forefront of Cancer Focus NI's Equal Access Campaign, which lobbied the NI Executive to increase access to cancer drugs in NI. Tracy is determined to continue her dad's legacy and said, "I urge our politicians to make cancer their priority. Pledge to make a difference, and make it now."

## Rates hike warning



Pictured (L>R) Robin Osterley, Charity Retail Association, Margaret Carr, Cancer Research UK, Angela McGrath, Cancer Focus NI, and Jayne Murray, British Heart Foundation NI, represent 13 charities who warn that making charity shops in NI pay rates could mean they will have £5.5m less to spend on the most vulnerable.

Charity shops are currently entitled to 100% relief on their business rates, but this is being reviewed by the Department of Finance and Personnel at Stormont with the possibility that the relief could be reduced or eliminated.

A 100% rates bill could result in 52% of charity shops closing with 409 redundancies and 1,862 volunteer posts lost.

The 13 charities, headed by Cancer Focus NI, British Heart Foundation NI and Cancer Research UK, launched a new campaign #MoreThanAShop calling on the Finance Minister to ring-fence rates relief.

## Welcoming plain packs



Pupils at St Aloysius Primary School in Lisburn are delighted with new legislation that stops the tobacco industry from selling cigarettes in bright, glitzy packs to attract children. Instead cigarettes will come in standardised drab green packs with health warnings and graphic images to highlight the adverse health effects of smoking. For more information visit [www.cancerfocusni.org](http://www.cancerfocusni.org)

## Men taking action

Cancer has a major impact on the health of men in NI with around 6,600 diagnosed with the disease each year – but more are surviving and thriving.

Gerry McElwee, Head of Cancer Prevention, Cancer Focus NI, said, "Our message is positive – approximately 50% of all cancers can be prevented with a healthier lifestyle and men's cancer survival is improving.

"It's our mission to encourage men to take action and improve their health. It's never too late to start incorporating simple but effective cancer prevention measures into your daily life.

"There are some simple guidelines that everyone can follow – keep to a healthy weight, eat healthily, get more exercise, take care in the sun, if you drink alcohol limit the amount, and don't smoke. Seeing a doctor in good time can have a hugely positive impact. If you are diagnosed with cancer at an earlier stage there are so many more options for treatments leading to better outcomes. Finally, men over 60 should avail of the NHS bowel screening programme."

Our annual Men's Health Conference takes place at the Dunsilly Hotel, Antrim, on 15th September from 9am to 1.30pm, supported by MediCare Pharmacy Group. This free conference will explore life's challenges and barriers for men as well as review practical strategies that build resilience and allow men to bounce back. To register call **028 8676 6866** or email [denisebownes@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:denisebownes@cancerfocusni.org)

To read personal stories about men's health visit [www.cancerfocusni.org](http://www.cancerfocusni.org)



Health Minister Michelle O'Neill chats to Conor Cunningham, Sport NI, and Sandra Gordon, Cancer Focus NI, during Men's Health Week



With students from St Patrick's College, Bearnagee we launched Dead Cool - our new programme which aims to prevent students from starting to smoke.

## Dead Cool!

Dead Cool is our new innovative smoking prevention programme for 12-14 year olds which aims to challenge young people on their views about smoking and ask whether smoking is cool or if it's cool to be smoke free.

Professor Allen Thurston, whose team at Queen's University Belfast evaluated the programme, said, "Compared to the control group the classes that received Dead Cool were about 50% less likely to start smoking in Year 9.

"They were less likely to say they will try a cigarette after taking part in the programme."

Dead Cool supports the schools' NI KS3 Personal Development Programme and includes a resource pack with lesson plans, pupil workbook and videos. Bookings are now open for 2016/1017.

For more information call **028 9066 3281** or email [judithwest@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:judithwest@cancerfocusni.org)

## Sun safety for outdoor workers

We have teamed up with the Public Health Agency to remind outdoor workers to protect their skin from sun damage. Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer diagnosed in NI, with around 3,780 cases every year. We have worked with a number of local employers over the past year to develop a range of materials including a workplace sun safe policy to raise awareness of the risks associated with over exposure to UV rays.



A spokesperson for Gilbert Ash said, "We are using these new resources as we want to protect the health of our employees and skin cancer is a real concern for our staff who work outside. This initiative has helped considerably to improve knowledge and awareness of sun safety issues in the outdoor work sector. Everyone who works outside needs to think about sun protection, even on cooler, breezy days."

To read personal stories about skin cancer visit [www.cancerfocusni.org](http://www.cancerfocusni.org) For further information visit

[www.careinthesun.org](http://www.careinthesun.org)

If you are concerned about skin cancer call our free information and support helpline on **0800 783 3339** or email our nurses on [helpline@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:helpline@cancerfocusni.org)



# Running the extra mile for charity



Congratulations to Emily Stanton from Ballyhackamore who was so full of determination to run the Belfast marathon to raise funds for us that she trained by jogging the eight miles to and from her home and Belfast City Hospital while attending radiotherapy sessions following a breast cancer diagnosis.

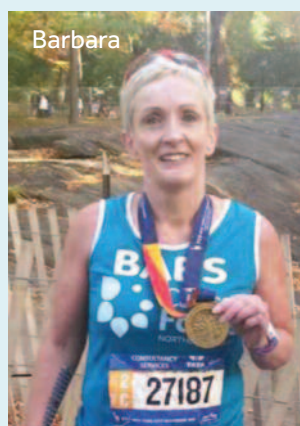
Having had surgery in June 2015, Emily went through five months of chemotherapy before radiotherapy treatment, which finished in January 2016. Emily said, "I hadn't run for many years but I thought the exercise could really help my energy levels as fatigue is a common side effect of cancer treatment. I found walking and running to my appointments very therapeutic - calming and exhilarating all in one. Running puts my head in a good place. I think it also sets a good example to my boys Liam (10) and Rhys (7), showing them that mummy is healthy - she's ok."

"I got tremendous support from Cancer Focus NI, so I was thrilled to be able to raise funds and give something back to

them. Their Family Support Service has given my husband Hedley and I the courage to talk openly about cancer with our children and they gave us practical and emotional support and guidance. I'm so appreciative of all the free help that they provide."

Special thanks to Emily's friends who completed the relay raising funds for us - thank you and well done on your achievement! For further information on our Family Support Service email [care@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:care@cancerfocusni.org) or call **028 9066 3281**.

A huge thank you to everyone who took part in this year's Belfast Marathon to raise funds for us. Many individual runners and relay teams took part with a number of participants entering from our corporate supporters including MediCare Pharmacy Group, Dalata Hotel Group, BRS Golf, Nandos, Boucher Road, Crawford and Co and the Department of Finance and Personnel.



Congratulations to Barbara Fleming-Ovens from Cranfield who is the first women in NI to have completed the six Abbot World Marathon Majors in Chicago, Berlin, London, New York, Boston and Tokyo while raising £13,000 for Cancer Focus NI - thank you! We have guaranteed places in many marathons and races. For more information or to book call **028 9066 0771** or email [emmamcardle@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:emmamcardle@cancerfocusni.org)

## Cancer Focus NI E-learning

We have expanded our current training methods to give individuals the opportunity to access training online - at home/work, on their computer/mobile/hand held device - and complete courses at a time that suits them.

We're starting with our Brief Intervention course for Stopping Smoking, targeted especially at health professionals to give them confidence in raising the issue of stopping smoking.

This is the first of many courses and adds to our growing training portfolio. For more information visit [www.cancerfocusni.org](http://www.cancerfocusni.org)

## Take up the challenge



We offer places at a full range of fun charity challenge events such as the mud-tastic award winning challenge event Run Mucker Run. You can enjoy relay races in zorbs on the River Lagan, skydiving, abseiling and lots more while raising funds for us.

For more information call Emma on **028 9068 0771** or email [events@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:events@cancerfocusni.org)

# Be a volunteer - sign up today!

Cancer Focus NI is at the forefront of bringing health messages right into the heart of local communities and you can help spread that message as a **Community Health Volunteer**. Help people understand how they can reduce their risk of cancer by following our advice on smoking, alcohol, diet and exercise, and taking care in the sun. As a volunteer you will be going to events in local community centres, businesses, churches or schools to help deliver our message.

So if you are interested and available at least one week day per month please get in touch with Morag at [moragchambers@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:moragchambers@cancerfocusni.org) or call **028 9066 3281**.

We are looking for new volunteers to join our team of beauty therapists providing short one-to-one beauty sessions to cancer patients in Belfast City and Craigavon Area Hospitals. Susan Johnston, our senior Beauty Therapy volunteer, pictured at our nail bar in the Bridgewater Suite, City Hospital, said, "I'm a retired Beauty Therapist and it gives me great satisfaction to provide much needed respite for patients, giving them time away from their cancer diagnosis and treatment."



Rohan Komatt, from Belfast, volunteers as a Cancer Focus NI Champion - helping to increase awareness of the charity and our services in his local area. Rohan said, "My present role is an exciting opportunity to make local businesses, communities and the general public more aware of the charity's work, to provide information on staying healthy and to promote Cancer Focus NI. I enjoy meeting new people, creating awareness and know that in a small but significant way I'm helping people."



There are lots of volunteering opportunities available and we provide full training and support. Find out more on how you can become a Cancer Focus NI volunteer by contacting Morag at [moragchambers@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:moragchambers@cancerfocusni.org) or call **028 9066 3281**.

## Bra-fitting service for breast surgery patients

More than 1,000 local women are diagnosed with breast cancer each year and to help meet their needs we have set up our specialist bra and swimwear fitting service for women who've had breast surgery in eight locally-based centres in Belfast, Altnagelvin, Cookstown, Enniskillen, Newry, Donaghmore, Ballymoney and Omagh. We offer a free private consultation and a wide selection of reasonably priced specialist bras and swimwear.

Breast cancer survivor Valerie Wilkinson, from Dunseverick near Bushmills, said that our service was a 'lifeline' and a 'valuable aid' to helping women regain their confidence after a mastectomy.

Valerie said, "Initially I met the charity's professional bra-fitter, at Altnagelvin Area Hospital, who is a lovely lady. She makes you feel very at ease, which helps enormously. Since then a new service has opened at the Robinson Hub in Ballymoney, which is even better. I can be there and home again in no time. It's a fantastic boost for local women who've had breast surgery – the last thing you need after cancer is to have to travel long distances for something like a bra that fits properly along with a prosthesis."



"I'm absolutely delighted with the service provided by Cancer Focus NI – it's so important. Cancer affects everyone differently and many women lose confidence and self-esteem after surgery. It is important to have the right underwear and this is where Cancer Focus NI comes into its own. Being able to look and feel good in your clothes is essential to your well-being."

For more information call **028 9066 3281**, email [care@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:care@cancerfocusni.org) or visit [www.cancerfocusni.org](http://www.cancerfocusni.org). If you have any concerns about cancer call the Cancer Focus NI free helpline on **0800 783 3339** and speak to a specialist cancer nurse.





## Acheson & Glover

A huge thank you to Acheson & Glover, concrete products manufacturer, who chose us as their charity partner and have raised an outstanding £10K to date through a variety of events. These included a Megapull, coffee mornings and staff dress down days. We really appreciate your support.



## Irwin's Bakery

Irwin's, one of NI's top bakeries, has announced Cancer Focus NI as its charity partner.

Rosie Forsythe, Corporate Fundraising Manager at Cancer Focus NI, said, "We're thrilled that Irwin's Bakery has chosen us as their new charity partner. Irwin's employees have held a number of fundraising events so far including a charity cycle, raffles, dress down days, Jail a Male and a football tournament – thank you!"

We will be holding a number of cancer awareness staff information days at Irwin's Bakery which will include care in the sun clinics, stop smoking kiosks and a visit from our Keeping Well van. For more information on corporate partnerships, please contact Rosie on **028 9068 0759** or email [rosieforsythe@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:rosieforsythe@cancerfocusni.org)

## Join your local fundraising group!

We have started a new fundraising group in Holywood and we're looking for people of all ages to join us to help raise funds and act as brand champions, spreading the word about our work in your community. Joining a Cancer Focus NI group is also a great way to meet new people, learn new skills and get the feel good factor from helping a local charity.

We would welcome new members to any of our 12 groups located in Auger/Clogher, Ballymena, Claudy, Comber, Cookstown, Dromore, Enniskillen, Garvagh/Kilrea, Holywood, Newtownbreda, Newtownstewart and Rathfriland.



Thank you to members from our Rathfriland fundraising group who held a successful tea dance.

Our fundraising team are here to help support your events and give you practical advice as well as branded merchandise to help raise funds. For more information on our fundraising groups call Suzi McIlwain on **028 9068 0746** or email [suzimcilwain@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:suzimcilwain@cancerfocusni.org)

## Award wins

We are thrilled to have scooped a number of top awards including Best NI campaign at the UK Public Affairs Awards for our Equal Access to Cancer Drugs Campaign NI; finalists for Inspiring Leader of the Year in the CO3 Chief Officers 3rd Sector Celebrating Champions Awards; and winner in the Irish News Workplace and Employment Awards for Workplaced Excellence. Congratulations to Julie McConville who was a highly commended runner-up at the PA and Office Manager Awards and to Liz Atkinson, Head of Care Services, who was the winner in the health category for the Belfast Telegraph's Woman of the Year Awards.



Comedian Patrick Kielty joins sponsor Laura Millar (right) of Phoenix Natural Gas to present Marie Foy and Joyce Savage from Cancer Focus NI with the Irish News Workplace and Employment Awards for Workplace Excellence.

At the Institute of Fundraising awards we won the event of the year for Up the Lagan in a Bubble and congratulations to Sarah Lowry who won young fundraiser of the year. Carlisle Fresh Foods were highly commended in the partnership of the year category, and the Rusty Nuts challenge was also highly commended. Congratulations!

## Singing all the way to Wales



Sixty-five members from the Belfast-based Sing for life community choir took a musical three day trip to Wales to perform with the Welsh cancer choir Tenovus. The choir raised money for the tour by online crowdfunding, auctioning a donated handmade guitar and a number of smaller events.

Sing for Life, a partnership between Cancer Focus NI and the Crescent Arts Centre, is a vibrant and lively choir that was formed in 2012 and now has over 100 members. June Silcock from Belfast, who is the choir chairman and a member, cared for her late husband Joe who had a stroke and then was diagnosed with multiple myeloma. June said, "I love the choir – it has been a wonderful support to me. It makes your own troubles a bit smaller when you hear what others are going through. The choir doesn't make me miss my husband any less but we used to love singing in our church choir together and continuing to do something that we both enjoyed makes me feel closer to him now."

The choir is appealing for more men to join.

For more information call **028 9066 3281** or email [care@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:care@cancerfocusni.org)

For future appearances check out Sing for Life on Facebook.

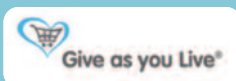
## Raise free donations



Raise up to 6% in free donations for us whenever you buy or top up with Give as you Live's new store cards for Starbucks, M&S, Cineworld and lots more. #CardsforCauses.

Find out more at

[www.cardsforcauses.giveasyoulive.com/charity/cancerfocusni](http://www.cardsforcauses.giveasyoulive.com/charity/cancerfocusni)



You can support us just by shopping online. Shop at thousands of leading stores such as Amazon, Expedia and John Lewis and a donation will be made to us without costing you a penny extra.

Visit [www.giveasyoulive.com/join/cancerfocusni](http://www.giveasyoulive.com/join/cancerfocusni) and start raising funds today!

## Add colour to your life

We provide a range of services free of charge for cancer patients including art therapy – so why not sign up and add a splash of colour to your life! Alan Gordon, from Newtownabbey, was diagnosed with lymphoma three years ago and he also has Parkinson's Disease. Alan said, "I go to Cancer Focus NI's art therapy and the Sing for Life choir and I've found them both



excellent ways of making new friends, sharing experiences and picking up tips on how to cope with various side-effects from treatment. There's no pressure to talk if you don't want to, but you can listen to others and gain some insights from that."

Our art therapy sessions are entirely confidential and take place in a safe and caring environment. You don't need to have any experience or skill in art to take part and all materials are provided free of charge.

To book a place please call **028 9066 3281** or email [care@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:care@cancerfocusni.org)

## A favour for you and for others



It's the little things that can make the biggest difference. Why not consider donating in lieu of party favours – and help others as you celebrate your wedding, special birthday, christening, retirement or other big occasion.

Not only are our personalised favours perfect for adding those finishing touches to your celebration but you will be helping to raise funds to support local cancer patients and their families. We ask for a minimum donation of £1 per card which are personalised with your name, celebration date or even a personalised poem. Pin badges and sweets are both an additional £1 each. For more information or to place an order call **028 9066 3281** or email [fundraising@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:fundraising@cancerfocusni.org)

For information on our upcoming events visit  
**[www.cancerfocusni.org](http://www.cancerfocusni.org)**

