Issue Two: Autumn 2012

the new name for the
Ulster Cancer Foundation

Cancer Focus
NORTHERN IRELAND

think pink!
Welcome to Focus On, our quarterly newsletter. We’ve had a very exciting few months changing from the Ulster Cancer Foundation to Cancer Focus Northern Ireland.

To mark our name change we have extended our LivingWell programme services for cancer patients and their families that we provide on a one-to-one or group basis. We are working in partnership with Lilac Life for Living After Cancer, a local cancer charity based in Coalsiland and Cookstown. At Lilac premises we are providing a regular support group for cancer patients, our free Beauty for Life service and our specialist bra and swimwear fitting service for women who have had breast surgery.

We will also be extending our fitting service to Care for Cancer based at 1 Campsie Place, Omagh (please call 028 8224 6599 to make an appointment). Local people in the mid-Ulster area can now access these free services on their doorstep.

We’ve introduced a new Art Journaling service and we’ve expanded our Walking for Life service to the L’Derry and Strabane areas. Our new Sing for Life service will start on 17th September - a choir run in partnership with the Crescent Arts Centre in Belfast.

Under our KeepingWell banner we have launched a new education programme ‘Well Aware’ aimed at older people in supported living, residential care and nursing homes or older people who are living independently. Our Education Minister John O’Dowd helped us launch our Schools Health Education Package to encourage children to make healthy choices from an early age.

We continue to invest in ground-breaking research and this year we will appoint a Cancer Focus post-doctoral fellow at Queen’s University, Belfast, helping keep intellectual talent here in Northern Ireland.

Once again, a big thank you for your continued dedication and support – it is greatly appreciated.

Roisin Foster
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S FOREWORD

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New ‘Well Aware’ Project for Older People

‘Well Aware’ is a new project which will deliver key cancer information and prevention messages to older people to promote a healthier lifestyle and encourage uptake of available screening.

Gerry McElwee, Head of Cancer Prevention, Cancer Focus, said the project would also help raise awareness of signs and symptoms of the disease. “Our research shows that 26% of patients who died from cancer in acute hospitals were older people who were only diagnosed on their first admission to hospital. It is vital that we take steps now to help people reduce their risk and seek help when treatment can be more successful.”

‘Well Aware’ will encourage older people to go to their GP if they have any concerns. Health checks will be provided by a Cancer Focus nurse including cholesterol, blood pressure, glucose and height and weight, to reassure older people or signpost them to the relevant health profession.

The ‘Well Aware’ project is funded for five years by the Big Lottery Fund through the ‘Reaching Out – Connecting Older People’ programme.

We’ve launched a new Art Journaling service for cancer patients as research shows that writing and creating art can have therapeutic benefits. It gives people a voice and a means to express their experience of cancer.

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 one day programme which will then give you the skills to continue your journal at home.

Workshops will be held from 11am – 2pm on 28th September 2012, 30th November 2012, 25th January 2013 and 22nd March 2013.

The journals and all art materials are provided free of charge. If you would like to register your interest or to find out more, please email us at care@cancerfocusni.org

Food for Thought

We have launched a free Schools Health Education Package (SHEP) in a bid to tackle childhood obesity, sunburn and smoking to reduce our children’s future risk of cancer and other serious health conditions.

The Schools Health Education Package (SHEP) encourages children to make healthy choices from an early age. The key messages will cover a range of relevant topics including healthy food choices, the importance of regular exercise, covering up in the sun to prevent skin damage and highlighting the harmful effects of smoking while developing the skills necessary to refuse that crucial first cigarette.

Education Minister John O’Dowd said, “I welcome any information that helps our children and young people make healthy food choices and realise the importance of regular physical activity. Exercise coupled with a healthy, balanced diet aids children’s ability to concentrate and focus in class, leading to improved educational outcomes and long term life chances.”

The SHEP programme includes activities for nursery school children, interactive storytelling about Genevieve the Goat for P1 and P2 focusing on healthy eating and exercise, a Fit Factor challenge for P3 and P4, Sun Scientists for P5 and Smokebusters for P6 and P7 pupils. Schools are invited to sign up for the whole package or any one element of the Programme by contacting Clare Smith at Cancer Focus on 028 9068 0736 or email claresmith@cancerfocusni.org

In Memory of...

We were very sorry to hear of the sudden death of Dr Joan Turner. Dr Turner, from Belfast, had a varied and active career. She was one of the first researchers into the early diagnosis of breast cancer and we were proud to fund her work in the 1970s and 1980s. We would like to pass on our deepest sympathy to her family, her patients, former colleagues and to all who knew her.

We would like to thank everyone who donated in lieu of flowers.

Research

We promote and support internationally competitive, high quality research into the causes, treatment and prevention of cancer. One of the major funders of cancer research in Northern Ireland, we have invested over £1m over the years. This work helps identify the causes of cancer and points the way to improved methods of diagnosis and treatment.

Highlights include jointly funding the setup of the Department of Oncology at Queen’s University Belfast; extending our investment in innovative research at the University of Ulster; and funding and establishing the NI Cancer Registry which collates data on the incidence of cancer and the outcomes for local patients.

We have just appointed a Cancer Focus Northern Ireland Research Fellow, Dr. Kieran Savage, at Queen’s University, Belfast, for four years.

Dr. Savage has identified new cancer genes, which appear to be involved in the development of breast and ovarian cancers and some forms of leukaemia. These cancers often arise due to damage to ‘gatekeeper genes’ that control how often cells divide, allowing cells to grow out of control forming a tumour. The new cancer genes that Dr. Savage has discovered appear to help repair damaged gatekeeper genes.

We also look forward to the results of research projects, funded by Cancer Focus, from the NI Cancer Registry on the factors that enable cancer patients to die at home and on the role of the GP and primary care nurse in cancer prevention from the University of Ulster. We will share these results with you when they are published later in the year.

In the Picture

We’ve launched a new Art Therapy programme which will then give you the skills to continue your journal at home.

Living Well programme highlights during Autumn include:

- Writing for Life – 6 week creative writing group in Agnes Jones House, Antrim Hospital, facilitated by local writer Madeline McCully, starting 24th October.
- Zest for Life – 6 week programme at Agnes Jones House, Antrim Hospital, starting 18th September; Braid Town Hall, Ballymena, starting 26th September; Newtownards starting 28th September. Session also at Enniskillen on date to be confirmed.
- Sing for Life – a choir for cancer patients and their families starting 17th September at 6pm at the Crescent Arts Centre, Belfast. Anyone affected by cancer is welcome and there is no auditioning – every voice counts.
- Lymphoma Conference in association with the Irish Cancer Society, 15th September at 3iveTwo Training Suite in Titanic Quarter.
- Laryngectomy conference on 26th September at Cancer Focus.
- September/October – Matthew Knowles’ unique exhibition of art created during art therapy sessions will be on display at Whitsay Medical Building, Queen’s University Belfast.
- Art Therapy
  - Coleraine 10th September – 15th October
  - Downpatrick 12th September – 17th October
  - Ballymoney 18th September – 23rd October
  - Ballycastle 5th November – 10th November
  - Ballymena 5th November – 10th December
  - L’Derry 6th November - 11th December
  - Newry and Dungannon dates are to be confirmed.

If you would like to register your interest or to find out more, please call Toby Wheeler on 028 9068 0751 or toby.wheeler@cancerfocusni.org

For information on our upcoming events log onto: www.cancerfocusni.org
Olympian Feat
Three superb local triathletes successfully completed one of the toughest challenges of their lives – the gruelling Decaman triathlon at Eskragh Lough, Dungannon.
Bob Davison, from Cookstown, his cousin Keith Clarke, from Dungannon, and Andrew Hassard, from Ballyclare, amazingly swam 24 miles, cycled 1,120 miles, and ran 262 miles each day for 10 days!
Other participants undertook their own personal challenges in cycling, swimming and running and the event has raised over £10,000.

Top of the Class
Rossmar Special School, Limavady, came tops in the Lidl Fit Factor primary schools competition aimed at P3 and 4 classes to promote healthy eating and physical activity. Thousands of children took part in the competition which was created by Lidl Northern Ireland along with charity partner Cancer Focus. In second place was Altishane PS, Strabane, and third was Larne and Inver PS, Larne.
Watch out for this year’s Fit Factor Challenge – for more information click on www.cancerfocusni.org or call Niamh at Cancer Focus on 028 9068 0764 or email niamhmclaid@cancerfocusni.org

Northern Bank Races Ahead
Joyce Savage, Head of Appeals and Marketing, Cancer Focus, congratulates Tony Wilcox, Managing Director of Retail and Private Banking at Northern Bank.
Tony has helped bring the bank’s fundraising total for us in the last 18 months to an amazing £275,000.
He recently completed a tough ‘Town to Town Tour’ when he cycled more than 300 miles in three days, visiting 34 Northern Bank branches along the way.

Girls on Top of the World
Congratulations to the 34 strong team from BeFit Fitness Club, Larne, who successfully climbed Ben Nevis on our BenHer all woman event in tough weather conditions. TV presenter and broadcaster Claire McCollum also took part. We have a full programme of charity sporting events which include marathons, canoeing, abseils, trek and much more – click on www.cancerfocusni.org for further details.

Wheely Big News
A special thank you to Jimmy Carrigan and friends who organised the Carrigan Forget Me Not Fund 100 Mile Classic Cycle which raised an amazing £26,500 (half will be donated to us). Hundreds of supporters took part in the 30 mile, 100 mile cycle and 5 mile walk. The fund has now raised over £31,000.

That’s a wrap!
Maevé Fox (centre) from Cancer Focus joins Lisa Boyd and Caitriona Flanagan from Belfast law firm, Cleaver Fulton Rankin, after a cinema night showing of ‘Breakfast at Tiffany’s’ raised £4,600 for our Zest for Life service.

Sssshhhhh!
In our next edition we will be announcing a new relationship where we will be one of the beneficiaries from a large sporting fundraising event to be held in 2013!

In the Driving Seat
Learning to drive? You can gain your driving licence while also helping raise funds for us through One Stop Driving Training in Newtownards, Bangor, Holywood, Dunderdonald, Comber, Ballygowan and South and East Belfast. For more information, please contact Maevé Fox at the Cancer Focus on 028 9068 0764 or email maevexfoxcancerfocusni.org

Best Foot Forward
Congratulations to Co. Tyrone man Trevor Hassin who raised a fantastic £1,900. Trevor, who worked for the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), walked 27 miles from Omagh MOT Centre to Cookstown MOT Centre in seven hours. Trevor is joined by his sister Pamela Mullan, who completed a mile of the sponsored walk while recovering from breast cancer surgery.

Farming Friends
Special thanks to Andy Smyth and family who raised £13,544 from an annual Barn Dance at their farm. Also pictured are Claudy Cancer Focus Group and Sylvia Lucy, Fundraising Manager at Cancer Focus.

For information on our upcoming events log onto www.cancerfocusni.org
Fundraising Thank Yous!

Barbara, Billy and Margaret held a cabaret night at the Burrendale Hotel, Newcastle, raising £1,300.

Stephen Lindsay, Tandragee, ran the Belfast Marathon and raised £3,878 for the Denis Bond Forget Me Not Fund. Eunice Kerr, Portadown, raised £100 from a 10k walk for the fund, which now stands at £4,497.

Belvoir Park Golf Club donated £680 from its Men’s Winter League Dinner.

Jim Bears donated £300 from a Drive For Life weekend.

Thanks to all who helped with Newtownbreda Presbyterian Church’s Flower Festival and donated £1,000.

Lisburn Graduates Swimming Club raised £1,200 at a sponsored swim.

Julie Black, Portstewart donated £1,000 in lieu of birthday presents.

Francis Hunter, Dunmurry, organised the Francis Hunter Trophy Golf Tournament at Allen Park Golf Centre, Antrim, in honour of his dad, raising £1,400.

Ballynahinch Chamber of Commerce raised £1,949 at a fashion show at Millbrook Lodge, Ballynahinch.

Drumgor Primary School, Craigavon, held a sponsored walk in memory of their teacher Diane Simpson raising £3,538 – half will be donated to us.

Sylvia Courtney, Ballymena, held a coffee morning raising £555.

The Lagan Seahorses Choir sang at a dinner dance at Bridge, Belfast and donated £500.

For information on our upcoming events log onto www.cancerfocusni.org

Three relay teams from Enterprise Rent-A-Car ran the Belfast Marathon raising £1,973 (half will be donated to us).

Postman Stephen Dunn was sponsored to wear his shorts on every shift – even in winter – and raised £1,000!

Donna Cowden and friends Paul, Lisa, Conor, Marie and Wilson held ‘A Night with James Huish’ at The Windrose, Carrickfergus, and raised £410.

Ballymoney Coleraine Supporters Club and Ballymoney and District Linfield Supporters Club held a football match to raise cash for the Davy Thompson Forget Me Not Fund. The total in the fund is over £4,500.

Three relay teams from Enterprise Rent-A-Car ran the Belfast Marathon raising £1,973 (half will be donated to us).

Cancer Focus Northern Ireland’s fundraising team can give you all the advice you need to successfully reach your target. If there is a challenge which is not listed we may still be able to arrange it for you.

For further information or to register please contact:
Sarah on 028 9068 0765 or email sarahatcheson@cancerfocusni.org
Neill on 028 9068 0758 or email neillgrainger@cancerfocusni.org

Paul McToal organised a ‘Fun Run of the Glens’ cycle in Antrim and raised £12,632. L>R, Herbie McAuley, Paul McToal, Suzi McIlwain, Cancer Focus, and Peter McToal.

Royal School of Armagh raised a fantastic £1,500 from a hockey tournament.

Downeys Bar, L’Derry, held a bucket collection netting £67.85.

Colin and Mavis McFarland donated £1,021 in lieu of Mavis’s birthday gifts.

Fintona Golf Club Ladies Branch donated £200.

£1,646 was raised at an Omagh Street collection.

£995.53 was raised at a Limavady street collection. Special thanks to the Limavady Cancer Focus Shop staff and volunteers.

Strabane SDLP Office held a coffee morning netting £300.

L>R, Social workers Linda Mooney, Shirley Ann Carey, Alison O’Boyle and Hiliary Niblock, raised over £9,000 at a Black and Gold Gala Ball. As they are members of the Greater Lisburn Gateway Team and employees of SEHSCCT, Health Minister Edwin Poots attended as a special guest.

2013

Ben Nevis Challenge 14th – 16th Sept
Lough Erne Canoe Challenge 22nd – 23rd Sept
Bedford Square Abseil 6th Oct

Winter Ben Nevis 7th – 10th Mar
London Marathon 21st Apr
Scafell Pike 19th – 21st Apr
Paddle the Bann 27th – 28th Apr
Glen of Antrim 12th May
Celtic Mountain Challenge 31st May – 2nd Jun
Ben Nevis Challenge 21st – 23rd June
Annalong Trek 24th Aug
Ben Nevis Challenge 13th – 15th Sept

For information on our upcoming events log onto www.cancerfocusni.org
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