

**focus  
on**



**Cancer  
Focus**  
NORTHERN IRELAND

Issue Ten: Autumn 2014

# GIRLS' NIGHT IN

**think pink**

**BREAST  
CANCER  
APPEAL**  
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## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S FOREWORD



Hello again. I hope you've all had a relaxing summer. All engines are revving at Cancer Focus NI as we gear up for a busy autumn.

In October, breast cancer awareness month, we're looking forward to our Girls' Night In campaign, which went with a real swing last year. We're asking you to get together with your friends for a night in – but donate what you would've spent on a night out to us. The money will go towards research into breast cancer that we're funding at Queen's University Belfast, where tremendous work is being done.

Over the last few months we've been urging everyone to support our equal access to drugs campaign, so that cancer patients in Northern Ireland can get the same life-extending drugs as those in England and Wales. You can add your support online at [www.equalaccessni.org](http://www.equalaccessni.org).

Other new developments include two new charity shops opening in Holywood in September and Ormeau Road, Belfast, by Christmas. As ever, we need more volunteers for all our shops and other activities.

To find out more call us on **028 9066 3281** or email [moragchambers@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:moragchambers@cancerfocusni.org).

It's time too for primary schools to sign up to our schools health education package SHEP, which works to lower the risk of children getting cancer in later life.

Best wishes to you all,

Roisin Foster  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Co-author Jeanne Rankin with her dog Mylo

## Food for thought when you have cancer

We've created a bright new Well Being Cook Book packed with need-to-know tips on how your diet can help when you have cancer and to help you stay well in the future.

The book has loads of recipes and advice on nutrition, along with breathing and relaxation techniques for you to check out.

When you're going through any type of cancer treatment, eating a nutritious, balanced diet is hard to do, especially if you have problems with side effects or you just don't feel well.

The most important thing is to keep up your strength, which may mean changing your diet.

We hope the information and recipes in our book will help you in a practical way to eat well and keep up your energy levels.



Written by former TV chef Jeanne Rankin (who also takes yoga sessions for us) with our staff members Niamh McDaid and Deirdre Conlon, the book will be on sale in good time for Christmas and would make an excellent gift. Keep an eye out on our Facebook for the launch date and if you'd like more information please email [deidreconlon@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:deidreconlon@cancerfocusni.org) or call her on **028 9066 3281**.



# Plea for equal access to cancer drugs

Cancer patient John McAllister (57), from Belfast, is delighted with our highly-successful campaign calling for equal access to cancer drugs for all local patients.

We launched our campaign in June and so far more than 15,000 people have signed up to support us online at [www.equalaccessni.org](http://www.equalaccessni.org). Over four thousand more have sent us letters and postcards of support.

John was told over three years ago that he was seriously ill, yet last July he was well enough to take part in a 200 mile charity cycle from London to Paris. However, John was forced to fight to get drugs that would help extend his life – drugs that were available in England but not in Northern Ireland.

John and his partner Nicki Darnbrook have a son, Daniel (5). He also has four grown-up daughters and a granddaughter, Dala (4). He very much wants to be with his family as long as possible and see the children grow up.

John first went to the doctor when a mole on his back became itchy and irritated. In March 2011, he was diagnosed with malignant melanoma and had the mole removed.

“When I went back in January 2012 for a check-up there were signs of cancer in the lymph nodes under my arm. That was when I realised that this was a cancer that could spread all through your body, killing you quite quickly. It was a massive, horrendous shock,” John says.

“In May 2012, I had a further four hour operation to remove the lymph nodes. That was pretty terrifying. I had no idea how I would come out the other side.”

Unfortunately, by June further scans showed the cancer had spread in the arm and collar bone areas. The Royal Marsden Hospital in London recommended the drug Ipilimumab, but doctors back home said it was unlikely he'd get it because of the cost.



Cancer patient John McAllister with partner Nikki and son Daniel

John and Nicki had to lobby MLAs and eventually got an Individual Funding Request approved for Ipilimumab.

Ipilimumab did extend John's life and he is now taking part in a clinical trial at the Royal Marsden.

Nicki says: “John was told by his consultant a few years ago that he probably had less than 12 months to live. John and other patients have families who they love and who love them. It's simply not right that they shouldn't have the same rights as others because of a postcode lottery.”

To donate to John's charity cycle visit [www.justgiving.org](http://www.justgiving.org) and search for 'Stormont-Paris'.

To support our campaign for equal access to drugs for NI patients please visit [www.equalaccessni.org](http://www.equalaccessni.org).



John spends quality time with son Daniel and granddaughter Dala

## Lidl Fit Factor winners



Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School, Omagh, is celebrating after being crowned Lidl Fit Factor Challenge Champions and winning the coveted top prize of £4,000 for sports equipment for the school.

The fun competition, designed by Lidl NI and Cancer Focus NI, promotes healthy eating and physical activity among Key Stage 1 classes across Northern Ireland. Our Lady's pupils, pictured above with Rugby star Stephen Ferris, triumphed taking first place, with Knockloughrim PS from Magherafelt in second spot, winning £3,000, and in third place was Millisle PS who received £2,000, also for sports equipment. For more information on the Lidl Fit Factor Challenge visit [www.fitfactor.co.uk](http://www.fitfactor.co.uk)

## ManAlive is superfit



Gerry McElwee, Head of Cancer Prevention, Sandra Gordon and Sharon Caulfield (right), all Cancer Focus NI, with Dr Una Lynch (second right), from Sonrisa Solutions, which evaluated ManAlive

More than 4,000 men in the Southern Trust area used the potentially life-saving Cancer Focus NI ManAlive health-check service between 2011 and 2013. The project, first of its kind in Northern Ireland, has been hailed as a huge success and has exceeded all its targets, an independent evaluation has revealed.

The main plank of ManAlive is the ManVan, which visits workplaces, farmers' markets, sports clubs and other local venues bringing health checks into the heart of communities to help lower men's risk of cancer.

For further information or to book the ManVan visit [www.manalive.co](http://www.manalive.co) email [behealthy@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:behealthy@cancerfocusni.org) or call us on 028 9066 3281.

## Young people FaceUP to lifestyles

We're launching a new novelty app for 16 to 23-year-olds called FaceUP to alert them, in a fun way, to the consequences of a poor lifestyle.

Using a pop-up style animation, the app highlights how a person's current alcohol and food intake may affect their appearance in 30 years' time.



Into the future – our new app will transform how you look

They simply take photos of themselves and use the app to record their current lifestyle habits. The app then shows what they might look like when they're older if they continue with the same habits - pointing up the potential cancers they could get.

The aim is to encourage young people to take better care of themselves and lower their risk of cancer in later life.

The app, which will be downloadable on iPhone, iPod devices and some androids - will be launched in Belfast at the Victoria Square Student Night on **7th October**.

Users can also share their 'older you' photo on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Keep an eye out for more information on [www.cancerfocusni.org](http://www.cancerfocusni.org).



# Congratulations - didn't they do well?



Ciaran Stewart collects his Dad of the Year award with children Cára, Ryan and Caiden

Congratulations to our Family Support Service for scooping the prestigious ni4kids Family Support Organisation of the Year gong at a fun-packed awards ceremony at Belfast City Hall.

Ciaran Stewart, who uses the service, was also voted Dad of the Year. Ciaran tragically lost his wife Fiona to breast cancer in April last year and since then the family has raised more than £8,000 for us so that we can help other families. To read their story visit [www.cancerfocusni.org](http://www.cancerfocusni.org) and search for Ciaran Stewart.

For more about our many services for cancer patients and their families please email [care@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:care@cancerfocusni.org)



Mark McCance with Family Service Coordinator Rachel Smith, who was named Belfast Telegraph Woman of the Year in the voluntary sector earlier this year

We're very proud of another of our service users, Mark McCance (13) - son of the late rally driver Neil who lost his battle with cancer earlier this year - who was shortlisted in the ni4kids Child of the Year category.

Mark and his family have raised an amazing £22,000 for us through their Forget-Me-Not Fund.

For more on our Forget-Me-Not Fund please call **028 9066 3281** or email [clairehudson@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:clairehudson@cancerfocusni.org).

## Talk about...

Rachel Smith, our Family Service Coordinator, recently took part in TEDxStormont 2014, an internationally renowned speaker event at Stormont.

Rachel was one of 23 high profile people who spoke on the theme of Getting There to over 200 guests. Around 10,000 viewers also watched via a live stream.

The speakers shared their ideas on how together as a society we can overcome modern day challenges. Rachel spoke on Writing for the Future – end of life conversations. The speaker event is held in various venues all over the world.

## Smokin' success

Well done, too, to our stop smoking specialists Bernie Neeson and Doreen Regan who were highly commended for Innovations in Smoking Cessation at the NI Health Care Awards for their work with young people. And we're delighted that our Lidl Fit Factor project, which encourages children to get fitter, came in the top three at the UK Business Charity Awards in London.



Bernie Neeson and Doreen Regan were highly commended for their stop smoking work with young people

# Cheers to one of our many star volunteers



Congratulations to our volunteer Heather Eves who has been shortlisted for Volunteer of the Year with the UK-wide Third Sector Awards.

Heather plays a vital part helping with our Family Support Service and her dedication is exceptional. She provides support to parents with life-threatening illness, working one to one with them, helping them compile memory books that capture their personality and the messages they want to leave for their children.

Her work is of immense value and makes a huge difference to people's lives.

We are very lucky to have her.

Our Family Support Service is looking for more volunteers. If you would like to help please contact Morag on **028 9066 3281** or email [moragchambers@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:moragchambers@cancerfocusni.org)

[Volunteer Heather Eaves helps families coping with cancer](#)

## We're also looking for help from -

- qualified beauty therapists to give beauty treatments at Belfast City Hospital
- drivers in the Newtownabbey area to take patients to hospital
- volunteers for our charity shops – Bangor in particular
- leaflet distributors based across NI
- data in-putting at our Belfast HQ
- Xmas gift wrapping at Victoria Square shopping centre, Belfast
- bucket collectors at Victoria Square



## Dates for your diary

### Breast Cancer Support Groups

30th Sept – Cancer Focus NI, 40-44 Eglantine Avenue, Belfast, 7.30pm  
 11th Sept - Rathain Fold, Union Street, Coleraine, 7.30pm  
 17th Sept – Dufferin Training Complex, Downshire Hospital, 7.30pm  
 Laryngectomy Study Day  
 24th Sept – Malone Golf Club, Belfast  
 For details email [eileencreery@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:eileencreery@cancerfocusni.org) or call **028 9066 3281**

### Zest for Life

17th Sept – 22nd Oct – Dungannon Enterprise Centre, 10.30am-1pm  
 10th Oct – 14th Nov – Marie Curie Day Centre, N'ards Hospital

**Art Journaling** 10th Oct, 14th Nov, 12th Dec – Cancer Focus NI, 40-44 Eglantine Avenue, Belfast, 11am-2pm

### Art Therapy

29th Sept-17th Nov, Agnes Jones House, Altnagelvin, 2pm-3.30pm  
 6th Oct- 10th Nov, Corrymeela, Ballycastle, 2pm-3.30pm  
 6th Oct- 10th Nov, Flowerfield Arts Centre, Portstewart, 11am-12.30pm

### Writing My Cancer Journey

10th, 17th, 24th Sept – Agnes Jones House, Altnagelvin Hospital, 11am-2pm

### Writing Workshops

3rd Oct, 7th Nov, 5th Dec – Cancer Focus NI, 40-44 Eglantine Avenue, Belfast, 11am-2pm  
 For details on the above services email [care@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:care@cancerfocusni.org) or call **028 9066 3281**

### Walks

27th Sept – Strickland Glen to Pickie Pool, Bangor, 10.30am  
 11th Oct – Loughshore car park to Monkstown, N'abbey, 10.30am  
 25th Oct – Steamboat Quay, Quoile Countryside Centre, D'patrick, 10.30am  
 For more details email [moragchambers@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:moragchambers@cancerfocusni.org) or text **0787 984 195**

### Crafty minds

Calling all crafters! We'd love to see you on Saturday 29th November at our annual Christmas Craft Fair at Knockbreda Parish Church, Belfast, from 10am-3pm. For more details call Morag on **028 9066 3281** or email [moragchambers@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:moragchambers@cancerfocusni.org).



# Have a Girls' Night In for breast cancer research

We're asking women everywhere to have a Girls' Night In in October to raise awareness of breast cancer and to help fund local research.

We're funding researchers at Queen's University Belfast, who recently made a major breakthrough that could mean new treatments for women at high risk of breast or ovarian cancer.

The research suggests that women with the BRCA1 mutation, who've an increased risk of breast cancer, might be able to lower their risk with drugs and possibly avoid a mastectomy (breasts) and oophorectomy (ovaries), and the side effects involved.

Suzi McIlwain, Community Fundraising Manager, said: "The research we're funding has the potential to make an enormous difference to the lives of many women - but we can't do it without you.

"You can help us continue to support our vital work by holding a pink-themed afternoon tea or cocktail evening, a movie marathon, a pamper party – or



Caroline McNelis and Maeve Colgan, Cancer Focus NI, cheer on Dr Kienan Savage whose team at Queen's University recently made an important breakthrough in breast cancer research

whatever you and your friends enjoy doing – and ask your friends to donate whatever they would spend on a night out to Cancer Focus NI instead. It's a great excuse to have a night in with the girls!"

If you'd like to help, get your pink party pack at [www.cancerfocusni.org](http://www.cancerfocusni.org), call our fundraising team on **028 9066 3281** or email [fundraising@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:fundraising@cancerfocusni.org).

## Bookshop wanted

Do any estate agents or businesses know of a vacant Belfast city centre shop that we could use, free of charge, for our pop-up bookshop?

Money raised from the shop will help run our Keeping Well vans. The vans tour local workplaces, schools, shopping centres, sports and community venues, giving health checks and lifestyle advice on smoking, nutrition, alcohol and exercise.

If anyone can help please call Angela on **028 9205 7002** or email [angelamcgrath@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:angelamcgrath@cancerfocusni.org).

## Marathon mania

A huge thank you to the teams who took part in the Belfast marathon relay event for us and raised a huge amount of cash: Flynn and McGettrick Solicitors, Belfast - £1,739; Nichola Casey and family - £3,796; Troup Bywaters and Anders - £1,847; Cancer Focus NI Team - £1,925; Keylite, Cookstown - £2,831; doctors from Coalisland Medical Centre - £600



## Donate day

We're holding a Donate Day on 13th September in all our shops across Northern Ireland. We hope you'll give us your unwanted, good quality goods and help us raise much-needed cash to keep our Keeping Well health check vans on the road.

For more details email [angelamcgrath@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:angelamcgrath@cancerfocusni.org) or call **028 9205 7002**.

Michelle Fordyce (right), new manager of the Holywood shop opening soon



# Huge thanks to all our fundraisers



The Gina Carrigan Forget Me Not Fund cycle raised £5,556. Gareth McElduff, Community Fundraiser, Cancer Focus NI, thanks organiser Jimmy Carrigan and Maura McCallion

Danielle Logan raised £1,144 and Chris Liggett raised £1,081 in sponsorship for doing the Obeil Abseil

Jack McGrath kindly gave up presents for his 9th birthday for donations to Cancer Focus NI's Family Support Service raising a fantastic £330

Gary Davison raised £1,892 taking part in the Glens of Antrim walk

Eileen McCaw and team ran the Larne half marathon and raised £4,879



FROG (Fun Run of the Glens) organisers, cyclists and fundraisers raised the amazing grand total of £31,336 for Cancer Focus NI and Simon Community

Gillian Morrison and son Matthew present a cheque for £2,735 raised at a charity golf day at Clondeboye Golf Club in memory of the late Uel Morrison

The Augher/Clogher Cancer Focus NI Group thank everyone who helped and donated at the Clogher Show raising over £1,700

Ultimate Health and Fitness, Irvinestown, and all who took part in their biggest loser challenge helped raise £4,830

Andrew Graham raised an amazing £6,612 at the London Marathon

£6,000 was raised by the Sean McDonagh Memorial committee at this year's Brookeborough Tractor Run



Ballymena Cancer Focus NI Group Chairperson Betty Millar and members present a £15,330 cheque to Maeve Colgan and Suzi McIlwain, Cancer Focus NI, raised from the group's events during the year and donations from local clubs and businesses

Staff and students of Oriel Training, Carrickfergus and Larne Centres, raised £247 at their open day with a coffee morning, raffle tickets and craft sale

Chloe Gillan, Cushendall, and friend Lauren McConkey, Ballyclare, organised a Girls and Boys Night for their friends and raised £365

The 2014 Pink & Brawn Calendar team raised £8,192 through sales of their calendar featuring and was produced by members of the DW Fitness Gym, Newtownabbey

Glastry Presbyterian Church donated £1,000 to the Mid-Ards Cancer Focus NI Group raised at a tractor run and BBQ

Niall Higgins completed the Energia 24 hour run at the Mary Peters Track and raised over £2,900

A Masquerade Ball at Glenavon Hotel, Cookstown, raised £2,180

A 24-hour non-stop scooter event was held by Philip Wilson and friends, raising £2,512

Niall Diamond, Bellaghy, held a table quiz and raised £1,009

Specdrum Engineering, Dungannon, donated £300 after our Keeping Well van visited their business



Paul McErlain, Magherafelt, raised over £9,500 this year with the help of his friends through several ultra-athletic events

Paula McCormack, Castledawson, held snooker event and raised £200

Adrian Pattison, Castledawson, held a football tournament raising £655

Jim Regan held a treasure hunt in the Moy and raised £587

Berach O'Hagan, Dungiven, ran the Brisbane Marathon and raised \$1,781

## Sporting events 2014

Runher - 5th October  
Think Pink Skydive - 25th October  
New York Marathon  
- 2nd November

## Sporting events 2015

Barcelona Half Marathon  
- 15 February  
London Marathon - 26 April  
Slieve Donard Moonlit Walk - May

### Visit

[www.cancerfocusni.org/events](http://www.cancerfocusni.org/events) for more information. If you can't see the event that suits you, just give us a call and we can make it happen – email [emmamcardle@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:emmamcardle@cancerfocusni.org) or call 028 9066 3281

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

