



cancer fund
for children

Right Support, Right Time, Right Approach

2021/22

Impact Report



Annabel with her Cancer
Support Specialist, Hannah

Our vision is that no child should face cancer alone.

We want every child (aged 0-24) to have access to the right emotional and therapeutic support to help them cope better with the impact cancer has on their lives.



Lucy at the launch of
Rory's Miles 2 Mayo

A message from our CEO

Welcome to our 2021/2022 Impact Report.

This year, brought many challenges as Covid-19 continued to impact our everyday lives. I am so proud of the team at Cancer Fund for Children who stepped up to offer help and support to children, young people and families, many of whom faced additional challenges which impacted their cancer treatment and their ability to access support.

Thankfully, some normality started to return this year. In the community, our team of Cancer Support Specialists were able to provide direct support in family homes. Residential group support, which was interrupted throughout the previous year, also resumed. I cannot tell you how heartening it is to hear the sound of laughter and camaraderie coming from our Narnia residential log cabin once again. We also enhanced the support we offer parents and bereaved families.

With restrictions starting to ease we were able to safely increase the number of families benefitting from therapeutic, short breaks. The team were also able to resume complementary therapies and treatments, and our parental health and well-being mini breaks recommenced in September.

Unfortunately, Covid-19 continued to impact our ability to hold in person fundraising events but once again our corporate and community supporters did not let a global pandemic stop their enthusiasm and passion to raise funds for Cancer Fund for Children.

I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thanks to all the people, clubs, schools, businesses, corporate partners, teams and families who go the extra mile for Cancer Fund for Children.

We are so lucky to have such an amazing community of supporters. I feel confident that with your continued support we will be able to deliver on our mission to ensure that no child has to face cancer alone.

Enjoy reading,



Phil Alexander, CEO



Year In Numbers

2021/22

We connect, empower, and strengthen children, young people and families struggling to cope with the emotional impact of cancer.



We supported over **1,400 children** and young people and over **1,100 parents/carers**, helping them to cope better with the emotional impact of cancer.

Support in the Community

This year we have seen significant growth in demand for support for children and young people impacted by cancer, with 279 new referrals received in 2021/2022.

Online support was a necessity during the most challenging stages of the global pandemic and we worked creatively and meaningfully in this space, but in-person support has always been critical in meeting the needs of children and young people impacted by cancer. This year the team worked hard to ensure that we could return to delivering in-person support as quickly and as safely as possible. 940 individual support sessions were delivered to help children and young people cope better with the emotional impact of cancer.

Following a consultation with families and our own team we have enhanced the support we offer the whole family. We have strengthened our bereavement support and recruited a dedicated Cancer Support Specialist to work with parents. Bereavement and parental support are two areas we are enhancing through our five-year strategic plan.

We developed a unique partnership with cancer charity, Young Lives Vs Cancer. Together we are funding a new Cancer Support Specialist based on the hospital ward whose role is to ensure that teenagers and young adults (aged 16-24) are supported across four regional hospital sites.

Our ambition is to ensure that no child across the island of Ireland has to face cancer alone. This year we have taken the first steps towards building an all-island service. We have employed our first ward-based Cancer Support Specialist in Dublin in partnership with the Katie Nugent Fund, CHI Crumlin and Trinity College Dublin. This role will provide direct social and emotional support to families who are in-patient in the National Children's Cancer service (NCCS).

279 new referrals were received in 21/22, a 68% increase in the previous year.

"We were offered the support of a Cancer Support Specialist to help Annabel manage her emotions through this journey. Our amazing specialist, Hannah visits our home regularly and has helped Annabel so much with managing her fears and anxieties."

Sharon, Newtownards



Youth Engagement



One of the priorities of our five-year strategy is to ensure that the voices of children and young people are at the heart of our organisation and they play an active role in championing change across cancer services.

In April 2021 we recruited a new Youth Engagement Specialist to lead on the design, development and delivery of youth engagement during this pilot year.

In July, 18 young people ranging in age from 9-23 years old were selected to join our Youth Advisory Group (YAG) to help in the planning and development of our youth engagement strategy. Together they took part in 105 sessions to, in their own words, ensure:

"Our voices/ideas will be heard and taken on board to help make other young people's experience even better."

Mile in my Shoes

Mile in My Shoes was one of the campaigns designed, planned and implemented by the Youth Advisory Group.

On 19th March, 164 people turned up at Antrim Castle Gardens wearing their silliest shoes to walk a mile and raise awareness of how cancer impacts children and young people differently. Participants wore clown shoes, flippers, fluffy slippers, roller skates and high heels raising over £9,332.

To raise awareness, members of the YAG shared their first-hand experiences of cancer in the media with 20 news articles and four broadcast media interviews reaching over 1,114,851 people.

Explaining the motivation behind their campaign, one member of the YAG said,



"We asked people to wear uncomfortable shoes to symbolise how people walk an uncomfortable cancer journey. It was important for us to share our story so that people can hear how Cancer Fund for Children helps us."

#iWill Project

The #iWill Bereaved Advocacy Group was a year-long project for young people aged 12-17, funded through the Co-op Foundation #iWill Bereavement Fund. The group had all experienced the death of a parent or sibling and wanted to use their experiences to create change for others.

After consulting with other bereaved young people and undertaking their own desk research, they found a recurring theme - the experience of bereaved young people in schools varied vastly between schools and often young people were not involved in the decisions around how they were supported.

The group decided to focus their efforts on improving support for bereaved young people to ensure that **"schools are a safe, comfortable and supportive place for bereaved students in Northern Ireland."**

They found that this was a desire echoed by schools who welcomed input from bereaved young people. The group worked with a range of other stakeholders to develop and produce their own peer-led resources, which includes a 'Bereavement Support Plan' and accompanying guidance booklet for school staff which is available to download from our website.

As Cancer Fund for Children moves towards youth engagement this pilot has proved an opportunity for learning which has informed the development of our youth engagement structure.

Youth Advisory Feedback



"Meeting, interacting and building friendships with other young people with the same experience helped me realise that I am not alone in my ways of experiencing grief."

- #iWill Group Member

Therapeutic Short Breaks

As Covid-19 restrictions began to ease, we were able to safely increase the number of families we could accommodate in Daisy Lodge and by March 2022 were operating at full capacity. This was a welcome relief as short break referrals were up 30% from the previous year. The increase in demand for support further strengthens the case for a second therapeutic centre and we are continuing to raise funds to build a Daisy Lodge in Cong, Co. Mayo.

We also welcomed the return of complementary therapies and beauty treatments mid-way through the year as these are proven to enhance the therapeutic experience. Therapeutic arts and crafts continue to be our most popular family workshop. These sessions provide an opportunity for participants to express their emotions, practice mindfulness, and be together as a family.

The ethos of Daisy Lodge is one of connection. Families often arrive feeling weary and, in some cases, fractured by the cancer experience. Feedback received from families shows that over 89% of respondents reported that time spent together in Daisy Lodge strengthened their family relationship.



Pre-Bereavement Conference

In September we held a pre-bereavement conference in Daisy Lodge for health and social care professionals. The focus was on supporting families when a parent is at end-of-life. Dr Cherith Semple and Dr Jeff Hanna from Ulster University shared their research with the aim of helping health professionals who support families in this position. Parent, Lisa Strutt joined as a guest speaker and courageously told her personal story of the death of her husband John. Lisa and her children were supported by Cancer Fund for Children and she shared her first-hand experience with the healthcare professionals in attendance.

As a result of the increase in requests for pre-bereavement support, Cancer Fund for Children has created two new Cancer Support Specialist posts, thanks to funding from the Department of Health. We have recruited a full time Cancer Support Specialist in Daisy Lodge whose role is to support palliative families and a part time Cancer Support Specialist. This new role has proven to be a lifeline to those families, as we respond to their need for enhanced emotional support at end of life.



Family Feedback

“

“We thoroughly enjoyed connecting as a family during the games and using the facilities. The atmosphere here has been so relaxing and contributed to our positive experience. Our short break opened communication, especially with our eldest.”

“

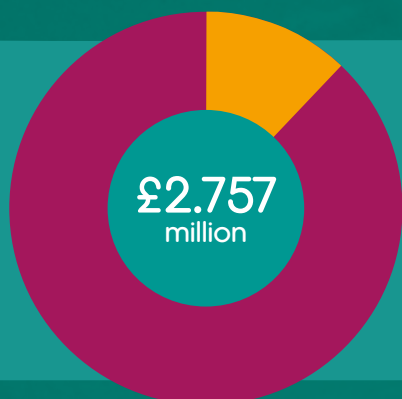
“Daisy Lodge provides space away from normal routine, to escape from other pressures and simply enjoy time together as a family. Time to have fun together is precious and can be difficult to achieve despite our best efforts. I think it is vital for families affected by cancer to begin the healing process.”

“

“We have been to speak with counsellors and therapists to deal with the consequences of death and grief, but I feel the opportunity to talk with other families dealing with similar experiences is so much more beneficial.”

Financial Performance

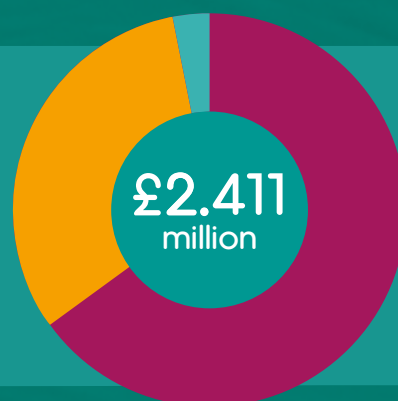
Cancer Fund for Children



Income



Expenditure



Cancer Fund for Children Ireland



Income



We would like to take this opportunity to thank our fundraising heroes, our corporate partners and schools and community groups for their generosity and support, as well as our funders for helping us ensure we can be here to support children, young people and families.

Our Funders

The Department of Finance
The Department of Health
The National Lottery Community Fund
Ulster Garden Village
The Ireland Funds
Children in Need
The Co-op Foundation
The George and Angela Moore Trust
The Katie Nugent Fund
ARN Foundation
The Community Foundation NI

Cancer Fund for Children registered office Curlew Pavilion Portside Business Park Airport Road.

Auditors - Moore (NI) LLP Donegall House 7 Donegall Square North Belfast BT1 5GB

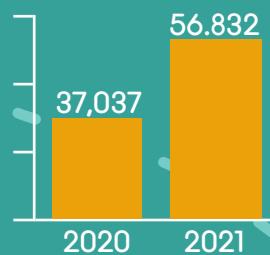
Cancer Fund for Children Ireland registered office 38 Mount Street, Dublin, D02 PR89, Ireland.

Auditors - RBK Park View House, Beech Hill Campus, Clonskeagh, Dublin 4, D04 X7V2, Ireland.

Communications and Awareness

In March 2021 we launched our **new website** which allows health professionals and families to make referrals online, guides people to information that is relevant to them and has a new resources section with lots of helpful videos and podcasts.

Website Visits



Rory's Miles 2 Mayo



During Childhood Cancer Awareness Month our ambassador, former Ireland and Ulster Rugby captain Rory Best walked over **200 miles** to support Cancer Fund for Children. On his journey Rory passed through 6 counties, 72 towns and villages, and was joined by families affected by childhood cancer. Rory's campaign helped raise awareness of Cancer Fund for Children across the island of Ireland and raised €1 million.

Rory Best flew the flag for childhood cancer. We reached new audiences, built new relationships and formed valuable new charity partnerships.



Rory pictured with Adam Watson.

Social Media Stats

	Followers	Reach
Facebook	19,569	565,711
Instagram	3,918	49,389
Twitter	6,021	1.4 million

Members of the #IWill
bereaved advocacy group.



 cancerfundforchildren.com

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cancer fund
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Registered with
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REGULATOR

Cancer Fund for Children is a registered charity in Ireland (20142681), CHY 21682 and in Northern Ireland (NIC100532).
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