



Daisy Lodge, Co. Mayo Capital Appeal FAQs



What is a therapeutic short break?

Therapeutic short breaks provide children and young people (age 0-24) diagnosed with cancer and their families with the opportunity to spend quality time together in a safe and supportive environment. Short breaks encourage rest and relaxation, teamed with unique support provided by our specialist staff. Families will also have the chance to meet and gain support from others in a similar situation.

Families can take part in a range of activities and workshops that encourage connection, relaxation and fun. Our team of trained complementary therapists deliver a range of therapies to promote relaxation and wellness and our hospitality team ensure families enjoy nutritious, home cooked meals throughout their stay.

Who do Cancer Fund for Children support?

We support children and young people (age 0-24) diagnosed with cancer, their siblings and parents. Our mission is to ensure that no child has to face cancer alone. Our aim is to provide therapeutic support to families at the right time, in the right way and ensure they are accessible to all children and young people impacted by cancer, regardless of where they live across the island of Ireland.

How do we currently support families in Ireland?

Cancer Fund for Children has a team of four regional Cancer Support Specialists who provide ongoing emotional and therapeutic support to children and young people in their home, communities, and shared care centres, helping them navigate cancer.

Our Cancer Support Specialist based at St John's Ward, Crumlin helps parents and children feel supported during their time in hospital. Working alongside them on the ward our newly recruited Youth Support Worker provides informal emotional and social support to young people aged 11+ during their cancer treatment.

This national community and hospital based service is delivered in partnership with the Katie Nugent Fund.

Why are you building a second therapeutic short break centre?

We are building a second Daisy Lodge because we want to ensure that all families impacted by childhood cancer are able to access therapeutic short breaks. We currently provide around 450 families a year with a short break but for every family we can support there are another six we cannot. Once our second Daisy Lodge is open, we will be able to provide over 1,000 families a year with short breaks.

How much has been raised to date for the capital appeal and how has it been funded?

To date, €13.5 million has been raised towards the capital appeal. This includes €7.5 million of government funding (€5 million from the Department of Health and €2.5 million from the Shared Island Fund) along with private and public funding. No stone has been left unturned to ensure we meet our target and we are incredibly grateful for the generosity and support we have received from the local community.

Why are you building in the West of Ireland?

The location of our second Daisy Lodge was carefully selected from 12 sites that were shortlisted across Ireland. Situated on the shores of Lough Corrib in an area of outstanding natural beauty, near the village of Cong in Co. Mayo, the surrounding environment promotes peace and tranquillity. Families staying here will be able to benefit from the soothing therapeutic qualities that Lough Corrib provide, enhancing their therapeutic experience.

Our site is also accessible to families living across the island. Travel from Dublin is approx. 2.5 hours, 3 hours from Cork and 2.5 hours from Donegal. Daisy Lodge is also within 40 mins travel time to hospital.

How many families will Daisy Lodge accommodate?

Once open, Daisy Lodge will be able to accommodate up to eight families at any time. All 16 bedrooms are ensuite and designed to be comfortable for adults, yet fun for children. There are adjoining rooms giving teenagers their own private space.

What facilities will Daisy Lodge have?

Daisy Lodge is designed to provide families with private space to spend quality time together in a safe and supportive environment. Central to that are private family suites which encourage rest, relaxation, and recuperation alongside communal areas, designed to gently and naturally encourage families to mix, share experiences and receive support.

Other facilities include:

- Lounge with a central fireplace and comfortable seating as well as access to a beautiful garden.
- Activity centre equipped with age-specific playrooms, art room and a games room for children of all ages to enjoy, as well as a relaxation area for parents and young adults.
- Beauty and therapy rooms including sauna, mini gym and hair and beauty stations to encourage relaxation, self-care and help increase confidence following a cancer diagnosis.
- Dining area where families can enjoy mealtimes together, something that is often rare during cancer treatment. Our kitchen will provide healthy, nutritious meals for families to enjoy breakfast, lunch and dinner together.
- Cinema room where families can chill out and watch movies together with other families.
- Outside spaces designed to encourage families to play, explore, build memories, and have mini adventures.

Is Daisy Lodge a medical facility?

Daisy Lodge is a non-medical facility. However, we will work closely with our colleagues in the HSE to ensure that if a family member requires nursing assistance during their stay, that is arranged.

When do we hope the build will commence?

Main construction is due to commence in Summer 2024, once the full tender process is completed in line with public procurement.

What work has already been completed?

Planning approval was granted in April 2018 with a condition for substantial works to commence on site within 5 years. Planning approval also contained several conditions that impact on the delivery of the finished site and building works. This includes ecological and archaeological monitoring.

Last year we commenced enabling works to complete 'substantial works' to ensure planning was extended for a further three years.

Under the supervision of an archaeologist and ecologist, a sub-base has been laid for a new access road, car park, the footprint of the building and an outdoor play area. We are working closely with National Parks and Wildlife and our own ecologist and archaeologist to ensure we protect the ecology of the surrounding landscape. We took a break from this between Dec-Jan 2024 and are finalising ground works between Feb-May this year, in preparation for the main contract.

This is to ensure:

- all risk is reduced in relation to any ground works.
- the project remains on track for a Dec 2025 completion date.
- the contractor can immediately commence construction on the build once appointed.

All costs associated with construction and ground works are closely monitored by the design team's Quantity Surveyor. E J Decey is a local contractor carrying out the enabling work.

Please note: Enabling works is a generic description for site preparation works that take place prior to work under the main construction contract.

How much will it cost to build Daisy Lodge and how long will it take?

The building of Daisy Lodge will cost in the region of €15 million to complete. We anticipate construction will take around 18 months and are aiming to have the centre operational by early 2026.

Why are you going through public procurement?

We are going through a public procurement process to appoint a contractor for the project due to the threshold of this capital project which is a statutory requirement and to ensure openness and transparency. This is an open tender and companies in Ireland and Europe who meet the financial and technical criteria can apply.

How much will it cost to run Daisy Lodge per year?

We anticipate that it will cost €1 million per year in line with inflation to run our therapeutic short break service.

Will this new centre create job opportunities?

Yes, as we prepare to open Daisy Lodge, we will be launching a recruitment drive for roles including hospitality staff, therapeutic staff, facilities and maintenance roles etc.