

SUPPORT



SPRING 2018



IRISH KIDNEY ASSOCIATION CLG

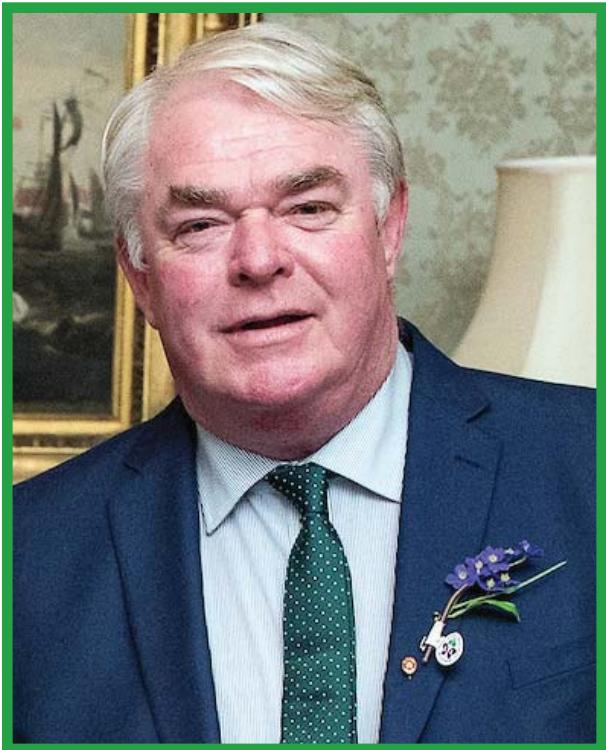
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Editorial...



On April 9th, 40 years ago, The Irish Kidney Association had its inaugural meeting in Jervis Street Hospital. Just 8 months later on December 7th, 1978, The Irish Kidney Association Limited was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. The recent evolution in company law adjusted the company name last year to The Irish Kidney Association CLG, Limited being replaced by CLG to reflect precisely what we are, a not for profit company limited by guarantee.



The IKA's 40th Year logo

The three dialysis facilities in the country at the time, Dublin, Cork and Galway patients joined forces to create a national organisation to produce and promote the then kidney donor card as well as the advocacy required to develop haemodialysis facilities around the country.

The 23rd such facility opened recently in Wexford - to say this was a marathon journey from decision to reality is an understatement but it is open now and Bbraun Wellstone expect to be open 6 days a week by May 2018.

I have further comments on other dialysis facilities in the statistics section of *SUPPORT*. We had a record year for kidney transplantation, 192 in Ireland and 3 paired exchange transplants in the UK, so 195 is the true kidney transplant total. The 3 in the UK rightly become part of the UK statistics.

The President and our Association Patron, Michael D Higgins and his wife Sabina invited 200 people involved in Organ Donation and Transplantation to a reception at Áras an Uachtaráin on Saturday, St. Patrick's Day, March 17th from 5-7pm. It was a wonderful occasion and our previous Ambassador Vivienne Traynor was the MC for the occasion. There were only 30 invitations available to the IKA. The weather did not exactly behave for the occasion but the Áras is a beautiful home. It was an honour to be invited by the President and his wife on our national day and to meet

Contents...



FRONT COVER

**Claire Byrne,
the 2018
Ambassador
for the IKA's
Organ Donor
Awareness
campaigns.
– See page 4**

- 2 EDITORIAL**
- 4 CLAIRE BYRNE, IKA AMBASSADOR**
- 6 ORGAN DONATION AND TRANSPLANTATION 2017**
- 8 TURNING DISABILITY INTO ABILITY**
- 10 CENSUS OF RENAL PATIENTS 2017**
- 13 'GIFT OF LIFE' MEMORIAL**
- 14 TÓMAS O'DOWD**
- 16 ASSUMPTIONS**



Arlene and Seamus Carrigan, pictured with Sabina and President Higgins



On December 19th 1963, Ted Tobin, an accomplished musician from Crumlin, made medical history when he underwent Ireland's first ever kidney transplant operation at the old St. Vincent's Hospital located on St. Stephens Green. Sadly just two months after Ted's operation he passed away on 16th February 1964. Pictured (l-r) are his brother Paul Tobin, sister Sylvia O'Donovan, Sabina and President Michael Higgins holding a picture of Ted Tobin, Ted's niece Fiona O'Donovan, and sister Jean Keogh.

so many healthcare professionals involved in organ donation and transplantation.

The recent snow brought out the best in our Irish spirit in helping our fellow man. There are numerous stories of neighbours, farmers, civil defence and various emergency services combining to get patients from their homes to haemodialysis centres and back. Equally the dialysis nurses, in particular, went to enormous lengths to get to their dialysis units. A big thanks is due to all concerned and although some lessons were learnt let us hope we might remember them when such a blizzard hits again in 30 years time (PG).

In the last SUPPORT a number of you completed and returned the EDITH patient survey. Can I just remind those of you who may have forgotten to complete the WP4 patient survey that it is available online at...<http://edith-project.eu>

We are delighted that Claire Byrne has taken up the Ambassador role to assist the Association's Organ Donor Awareness Campaigns. Her photo and articles have already appeared on the front page of two national newspapers. Organ Donor Awareness

Week starts on Holy Saturday, March 31st until the following Saturday, April 8th. Fundraising is not for everyone, but we would have great ambitions to expand the services to patients that the IKA provide. Your local Branch Secretaries await your phone calls offering assistance.

A couple of hours helping with the distribution of organ donor cards and selling our merchandise is what we are asking you to do. We have a small cohort of volunteers, in every branch, who are relied upon every year and they need your help to spread the load. Please do what you can. The extended winter weather we hope will have passed by then and I thank all the volunteers who are the backbone of the Association for 40 years.

MARK MURPHY

18 BROTHERS IN ARMS

20 REBEL GRANDADS WITH A CAUSE

23 GIVE THE GIFT OF LIFE

24 A PERFECT MATCH IN EVERY WAY

27 BOUNCING BACK

28 WORLD TRANSPLANT WINTER GAMES

30 44 YEARS LIVING DONOR

32 ST. PATRICK'S DAY AT THE ÁRAS

34 DIALYSIS FATHER TO RAISE FUNDS

36 NEW QUAY, NEW LIFE

38 THE OTHER MARTIN CAHILL

39 SOCIAL MEDIA

40 TAX RELIEF 2017

41 SPORTS

42 AROUND THE BRANCHES

62 MEMBERSHIP FORM

63 BRANCH SECRETARIES

IKA'S NEW AMBASSADOR FOR ORGAN DONOR AWARENESS



Claire Byrne

The Irish Kidney Association, which celebrates its 40th anniversary this year, is delighted to announce that Claire Byrne has taken up the voluntary role of ambassador for 2018 organ donor awareness. The prolific journalist and national radio and TV broadcaster will front the 2018 Organ Donor Awareness Week's campaign (31st March until 7th April) encouraging the public to support organ donation for transplantation.

Claire said, "I was delighted to be invited by the IKA to take up this role, following in the footsteps of previous wonderful national ambassadors, who are all united in the wish to spread the message that organ donation is an important life-saving legacy. As I take up this role, as ambassador, it is heartening to hear reports that last year was a record year for both deceased and living organ donors and subsequent transplant operations. All this good news greatly serves to offer hope to those 550 plus anxious people on the transplant waiting lists. I would encourage everyone to discuss organ donation with their family members. It is an important and potentially life-saving conversation."

"I have huge admiration for the many organ donor families, who made the selfless decision to donate a family member's organs at a time of deep grief, and also for living donors who make the conscious decision to donate a kidney. Credit must also go to the skill and dedication of our transplant surgical, medical and nursing teams in our country's three transplanting hospitals."

Chief Executive of the IKA, Mark Murphy said, "We are delighted that Claire has agreed to be the ambassador for organ donor awareness. Claire has furrowed a distinguished career as a much-respected current affairs journalist and enjoys household name

status. To have such a prolific figure representing the IKA, a registered charity of patients and carers, carries with it huge impetus to the work we have undertaken for 40 years in advocating and caring for our membership, while also being the organisation charged with the promotion and distribution of the organ donor card in Ireland by the HSE through their procurement service, Organ Donation and Transplant Ireland (ODTI). The organ donor card has developed from what started out as the kidney donor card in the same year our organisation was established in 1978.

"Claire is giving up her time voluntarily to front the Organ Donor Awareness Week campaign, this Easter, to help us raise awareness, amongst the general public, about the plight of people with organ failure and encourage families to discuss organ donation and consider being a donor in the event of their untimely death."

The popular broadcaster will feature in radio advertising and on posters as well as attending the national launch of 2018 Organ Donor Awareness Week by the Minister for Health, Simon Harris, TD, on Tuesday 27th March.

There are approximately 550 people in Ireland awaiting life-saving heart, lung, liver, kidney and pancreas transplants. Thanks to the gift of organ donation almost 3500 transplanted people in Ireland are enjoying extended life.

The focus of Organ Donor Awareness Week is to raise awareness about the ongoing and ever-increasing demand for organ transplantation which relies on the public for organ donation. Its key message is that families need to talk to each other and keep the reminders of their willingness to donate visible by carrying the organ donor card and permitting Code 115 to be included on their driver's license.

"I have huge admiration for the many organ donor families, who made the selfless decision to donate a family member's organs at a time of deep grief, and also for living donors who make the conscious decision to donate a kidney."

ORGAN DONATION AND TRANSPLANTATION

		2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	10 year Total	10 year avg.
Deceased Donors		99	77	81	63	86	78	93	58	90	81	806	80.6
Transplantation from Deceased Donors	Kidneys	141	122	120	112	147	131	165	98	154	136	1326	132.6
	Liver	62	58	61	44	55	50	61	38	64	58	551	55.1
	Heart	16	15	16	18	11	10	6	3	11	4	110	11.0
	Lungs	36	35	36	31	32	14	8	4	5	4	205	20.5
	Pancreas	5	0	0	6	11	1	8	8	9	12	60	6.0
SUB-TOTAL		260	230	233	211	256	206	248	151	243	214	2252	225.2
Living kidney donors & transplants		51	50	33	40	38	32	27	23	18	10	322	32.2
All organ transplants TOTAL		311	280	266	251	294	238	275	174	261	224	2574	257.4
Living & deceased donor kidney Tx		192	172	153	152	185	163	192	121	172	146	1648	164.8

Organ Donation and Transplantation 2017

For the IKA 2017 will be remembered for the record breaking rate of organ donation. We almost got to the 100 mark but 99 deceased organ donors, thanks to the generosity of the donor families, is a remarkable record number. In turn, and as a consequence, we had a record amount of deceased organ transplants of 260. Add in the 51, a record itself, living donor kidney transplants and we reach the record total of 311 organ transplants in one year. There were an extra 3 paired

**By
MARK MURPHY**

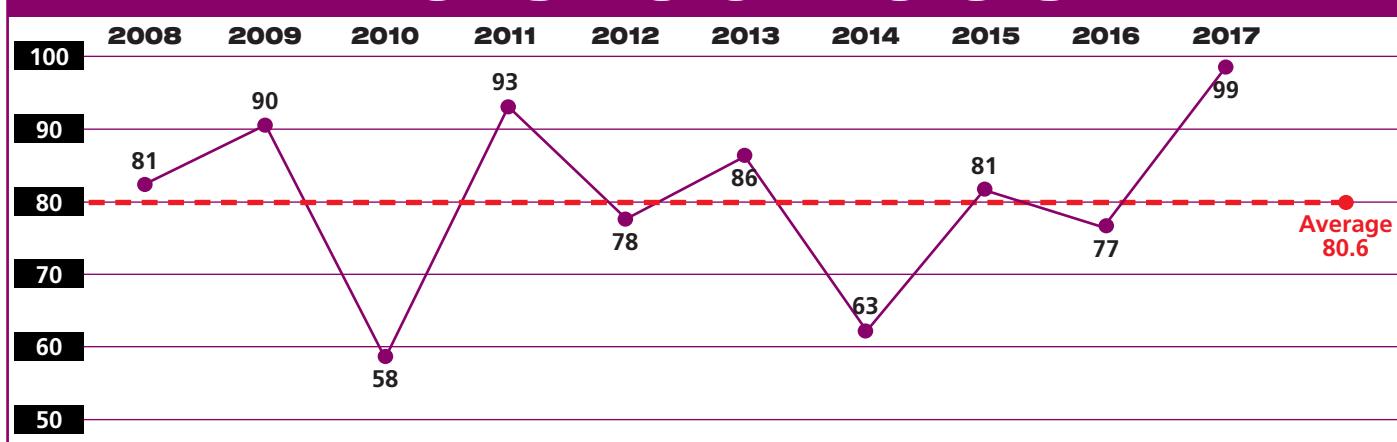
exchange living kidney transplants conducted in the UK on Irish patients.

There were two records equalled in 2017 – 36 lung transplants in one year was first recorded two years ago in 2015 and the 192 kidney transplants in a year first occurred in 2011. So there is a lot to be proud of. We have crossed back over the 20 deceased donors per million of

population (20.66 pmp) line, up from 17 pmp in 2016. The ODTI target of 25 donors pmp would require 120 deceased donors per annum, which is a realistic target, requiring an extra investment in intensive care organ donor personnel.

I'm hoping that the chart below with its' see-saw trend, will, because of our well above average year for organ donation, buck the trend since 2009 of following an above average year with a below average year, as indicated.

DECEASED ORGAN DONORS



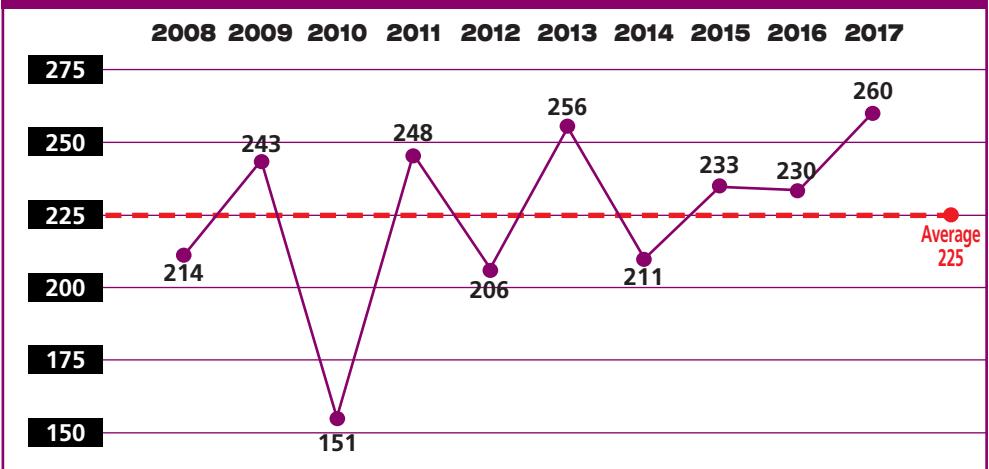
In contrast, the chart opposite previously followed the see-saw trend of the deceased organ donor graph, but thankfully, largely due to the increase in lung donation, the see-saw chain has been broken.

The extra training needed to develop cardiac death donation across the country will also need investment and one of the results of both of these investments is the potential for organ donation to put a halt to the continuous investment in haemodialysis facilities.

As I mention elsewhere in this SUPPORT, for the first time in the history of dialysis in Ireland, the number being treated, via dialysis, dropped rather than increased, be it by only one. If we had 120 donors per annum we could envisage more years where transplantation further reduced the dependence on dialysis. We are still a very fortunate population where 54% of our kidney patients are transplanted. Very few countries in the world have more transplanted patients than dialysis patients.



DECEASED DONOR TRANSPLANTS



SUMMARY ACTIVITY FOR 2017 FROM THE NATIONAL KIDNEY TRANSPLANT SERVICE

Kidney only transplants from deceased donors	136
Combined Kidney Pancreas Transplants	5
Kidney Transplants from Living Donors	51
Total number of kidney transplants performed in Ireland	192
Kidneys Transplanted through UK Paired Kidney Exchange Program (PKE)	3
Patients transplanted from the Irish Kidney Transplant Waiting List	195
At 31/12/17, patients active on the Kidney Only Transplant Waiting List <i>(Some of these patients were suspended)</i>	419
New patients approved for the Kidney Transplant Waiting List in 2017	200
Potential donors who underwent immunological testing after registering their interest in being a living donor	156
Number of Irish Pairs enrolled in UK Paired Kidney Exchange Programme	12
Potential pairs evaluated for the UK Paired Scheme in 2017 <i>(No donor evaluation is performed in Beaumont for people enrolling in Paired Kidney Exchange)</i>	17
Paediatric kidney transplants performed in 2017	12

Two noticeable landmarks in transplantation have occurred recently.

The 1,000th liver transplant was performed at St. Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin, and more recently the Kidney Transplant Unit in Beaumont and previously in Jervis Street Hospital, celebrated the 5,000th kidney transplant in Ireland.

The latter was honoured by the Minister for Health Simon Harris attending a reception in Beaumont

Hospital on February 15th, reported on page 13 of this SUPPORT.

A total of 524 people are active on the various Transplant Waiting Lists, or Pools, as we used to call them. A Waiting List implies that you will be chosen in order but as you know a Pool is a more appropriate description as it's your matching with an organ donor that plays a big part in how you get selected for a transplant.

(Left): Minister for Health Simon Harris at the reception in Beaumont Hospital to mark 5,000 kidney transplant in Ireland



TURNING DISABILITY INTO ABILITY

Aine Mae O'Mahony, originally from Lahinch in Co. Clare, has had many knock backs in her life but has proven that turning a disability into an ability and not quitting, no matter what, is key to her many successes.

At the age of 8, Aine Mae was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes. "There was not much known about diabetes at the time nor any new developments in terms of its management and it was quite terrifying holding that syringe for the first time preparing to inject myself" she recalls.

At 25 she lost her eyesight as a result of diabetic retinopathy. Many procedures, including laser and injections in both eyes, helped in maintaining the pressure, however surgery was required to re-attach a retina, all of this did not bring her sight back but was required in order to control pressure and relieve pain.

"I was running my own business at 23 and almost overnight I had no sight. I remember shutting down the business and sitting at home without anything to fall back on. I was unable to work my phone, make a cup of tea, leave the house on my own or hop into the car to visit my mum," she

remembers. After a number of weeks her cousin, who she grew up with, had returned for the weekend and could see how her life had changed.

"I remember him asking me had I been out and I said 'no'. He asked why? I said that "I am worried about not being able to see people and I don't know who I am speaking to." I will never forget his words, they were so short and simple, but so effective. He simply said: 'SO WHAT!'

"Those two words were enough to drive me on as here was my younger cousin, who I viewed as a brother, giving me the strength to get out there."

Following that Aine Mae learned computers and uses software that reads what she types. Emails, internet and database were all part of the course she did. Having equipped herself with IT skills she recalls always wanting to work in radio but never thought she would be able to. Taking her laptop to college she was able to take

notes and achieved her radio programming.

Aine Mae has worked in radio for nine years as a producer, presenter and the past four years has managed over 90 personnel.

For years she was aware that she was facing kidney failure and that she was operating on declining kidney function.

In 2015, she spoke to her renal consultant Dr. Niamh Kieran, who recommended that she had a think about entering the double transplant programme for a kidney and pancreas and that, if she agreed, they would start the work-up treatment.

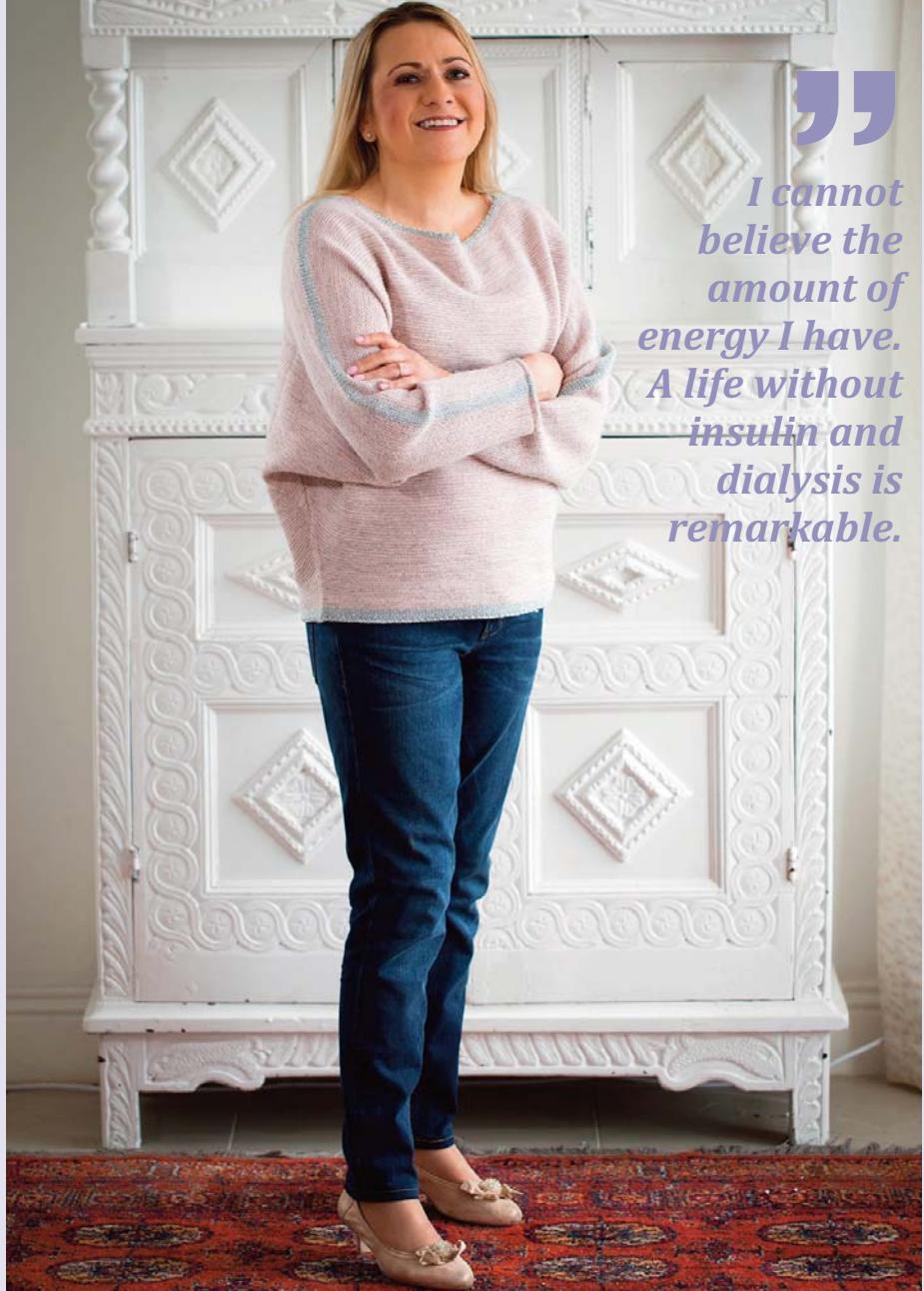
"Just three days after my appearance on the *Late Late Show*, I received a call, on a Monday morning in November, advising that I had to commence dialysis treatment within days. Being on dialysis was difficult as your body is going through a change yet again. Toxins and fluid must be removed in order to maintain health and the tiredness was what got me the most."

Aine Mae continued to work full-time with a supportive board of directors who allowed her to work from home on the days she had dialysis treatment. "I must thank the dialysis team at Wellstone in Galway, they are the most amazing group and make everyone so comfortable along with words of encouragement."

In relation to being on the double transplant list she recalls, "I believe firmly in the power of inner strength and positivity, what you put out there comes back but I could never want the transplant because I knew that in order for me to have it someone would have to pass away and that was tough. So I changed my thought on the transplant and said if I was given the 'gift' I would gladly accept it".

That gift was given to her last year when she received a kidney and a pancreas under the newly set up kidney/pancreas transplant programme at St. Vincent's University Hospital. "I just remember thinking 'this is it' and having total faith. After my 10 hour surgery I remember crying with gratitude.

The transplant team, headed by Tom Gallagher, was supportive and firm as their focus is making sure that I am doing everything I can from my part to ensure all goes well post-op."



I cannot believe the amount of energy I have. A life without insulin and dialysis is remarkable.

Aine Mae is now past her recovery stage and is making her mark once again. "I cannot believe the amount of energy I have. A life without insulin and dialysis is remarkable. It is a slow process post-op but all I kept saying everyday was 'thank you' for my healing and my upmost gratitude is towards the donor family and to the person who donated."

She said. "To make such a decision at a difficult time must be recognised and even more so on Organ Donor Awareness Week. If it wasn't for all these families transplant teams could not be in operation and people would not have a second chance."

Aine Mae returned to work in her management position and her successes in business have been well recognised, having brought the organisation from near closure, running at a deficit, to a modest surplus after three years. However, this year she has decided to pursue

other avenues and take on new challenges.

"After my transplant I have decided to step down from my position and bring my knowledge of success in business to other areas. I have proven that you don't need to have sight to have vision, therefore anyone is capable if they really believe that they can achieve. Public speaking and motivational seminars is something I enjoy because it's a reminder of what is possible.

"When I thought I was unable to face people after my sight loss it was those two words that my cousin said that pushed me forward. Sadly, he passed away last year when I was on dialysis and that was the toughest thing I ever had to go through. I will honour my cousin as well as my donor by always living life bright and to the fullest."

Aine Mae can be contacted by email ainemaez@gmail.com

MAP OF HAEMODIALYSIS UNITS USED BY PATIENTS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND AND DIALYSIS PATIENT NUMBERS AS OF 31/12/17



CHRONIC DIALYSIS & TRANSPLANT PATIENTS - 31/12/17

Dialysis Facility	HAEMO HD	HOME DIALYSIS HHD	PD	TOTAL DIALYSIS PATIENTS	TRANSPLANT AT CLINIC	TOTAL ESKD PATIENTS
ADULTS	HD	HHD	PD			
Beaumont	159	19	57	235	751	986
Mater	86		8	94	118	212
FMC Northern Cross	79			79		79
Beacon Drogheda	75			75		75
Cavan	69			69	18	87
St. Vincent's	88		13	101	141	242
Beacon Sandyford	81			81		81
Tallaght Hospital	104	5	34	143	309	452
Beacon Tallaght	82			82		82
Tullamore	111			111	55	166
Cork	160	16	25	201	300	501
Waterford	122	5	22	149	170	319
FMC Kilkenny	48			48		48
Tralee	45			45	66	111
Limerick	93	4	24	121	122	243
FMC Limerick	93			93		93
Galway	69	5	13	87	168	255
Wellstone Galway	55			55		55
Castlebar	63			63	64	127
Letterkenny	67			67	74	141
Sligo	52			52	32	84
Northern Ireland	4			4		4
ADULT TOTALS	1805	54	196	2055	2388	4443
CHILDREN Temple St, Crumlin	8		11	19	71	90
OVERALL TOTALS	1813	54	207	2074	2459	4533

IRISH DIALYSIS PATIENTS - 31/12/17

	Patients	%
Centre Haemodialysis	1813	87
Home Haemodialysis	54	3
Peritoneal Dialysis	207	10
Total Dialysis Patients:	2074	100

IRISH ESKD PATIENTS - 31/12/17

	Patients	%	PMP
Transplanted	2459	54.2	513
Haemodialysis	1813	40.0	378
Peritoneal Dialysis	207	4.6	43
Home Haemodialysis	54	1.2	11
Total ESKD Patients:	4533	100	946

PMP = Per Million of Population

Population 4,792,500

The National Renal Office (NRO) has published the December 31 2017 census of ESKD, patients. Thanks once again to Professor Liam Plant and Pat O'Connor for sharing the data with the IKA.

The headline figure has to be that for the first year ever, that I am aware of, we have negative growth in dialysis numbers. 2074 dialysis patients' is one less than at the start of the year. There are a number of factors that influence the figure but, as always, a good year for kidney transplantation is the key to how you can reduce the amount of people on dialysis.

Back in 2012-2013 we almost had a similar situation when the

continued next page →

ESKD TREATMENT BY UNIT TYPE - 31/12/17

	HD	%	PD	Home HD	Transplanted	ESKD
HSE Hospital Renal Unit (11)	1128	62.2	196	54	2226	3604
HSE Hospital Satellite Unit (3)	160	8.8			162	322
Commercial Satellite Unit (7)	513	28.3				513
Northern Ireland NHS (3)	4	0.2				4
HSE Paediatric Renal Unit (2)	8	0.5	11		71	90
TOTALS	1813	100	207	54	2459	4533

ONE-YEAR COMPARISONS

TREATMENT	2017	2016	% CHANGE	PATIENTS
HAEMODIALYSIS	1813	1810	0%	+3
PERITONEAL DIALYSIS	207	208	0%	-1
HOME HAEMODIALYSIS	54	57	-5%	+3
TRANSPLANT	2459	2379	+3.4%	+80
ESKD TOTAL	4533	4454	+1.8%	+79

continued..

numbers only grew by 3 people. It would be naïve of me to expect the downward trend to continue every year.

So, in total, there are 79 more people being treated for end stage kidney disease in the country at the end of 2017 which is reflected entirely in the growth of the people transplanted at clinics.

Exactly 4533 people with failed kidneys are in treatment of which 54% of them are transplanted.

946 people, per million of the population, is another method commonly used when we compare the Irish data to other countries' data or one in 1057 people have end stage kidney disease, being treated by dialysis or transplantation.

Next year's census will include data from the newly opened Bbraun Wellstone Haemodialysis facility in Wexford. The contracted dialysis facility in Portlaoise is next in line to open, due to be operational in 2019. The Tralee haemodialysis facility is going to be extended this year. The haemodialysis facility in Tallaght is now the oldest in the country and requires the go ahead to rebuild, however, that

does not seem to be forthcoming. It is the 5th largest haemodialysis facility in the country with the second largest number of post-transplant patients at clinic plus 39 home therapy patients. All the other HSE facilities have been improved or extended and Tallaght seems to be last on the list and needs replacement.

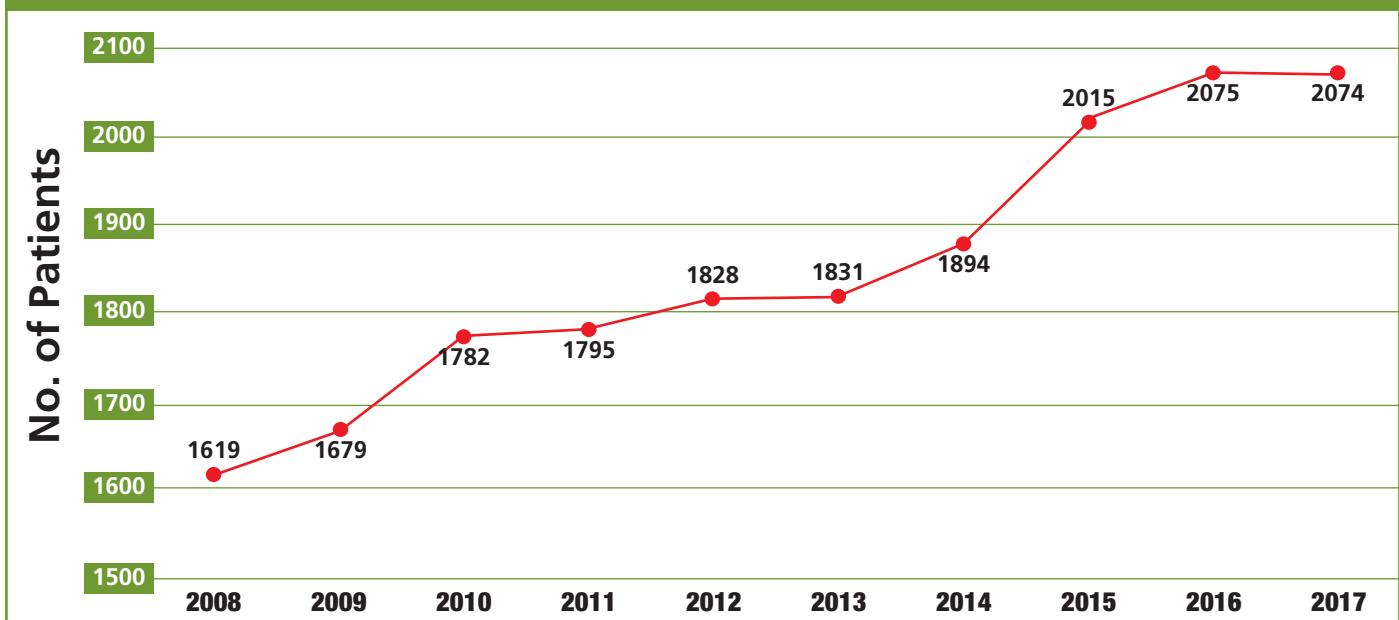
CUH, in Cork, has the most haemodialysis patients in the country, be it by one, over Beaumont. There has been talk, but no action, on the prospect of a commercial satellite unit to reduce the burden of the travelling time for Cork patients. Our second biggest city Cork, has only one haemodialysis facility whilst the smaller cities of Limerick, Galway and Waterford all have commercial satellite dialysis available. The transport for CUH based patients must be the longest average journeys in the country when you note the size of the catchment area involved.

When all of the above works are completed I believe the powers that be need to consider a number of smaller haemodialysis satellite facilities, maybe 3-4 station centres catering for cohorts of the longer journey patients.

5 YEAR COMPARISON ADULT HAEMODIALYSIS BY UNIT TYPE

	2017	2012	5 YEAR CHANGE	%
HSE Hospital Renal Unit (11)	1128	1023	+105	+10%
HSE Hospital Satellite Unit (3)	160	127	+33	+26%
Commercial Satellite Unit (7)	513	398	+115	+29%
Northern Ireland (2)	4	12	-8	-
Home Haemodialysis	54	28	+26	+93%
TOTAL	1859	1588	+271	+17%

NO. OF PATIENTS ON DIALYSIS DECEMBER 2008-2017



'GIFT OF LIFE' MEMORIAL

BEAUMONT HOSPITAL



Jame Nolan, Conall O'Seaghda, Consultant Nephrologist, Simon Harris, Minister for Health

On February 15th the Minister for Health Simon Harris laid a wreath at the recently erected 'Gift of Life' Memorial located just to the right of the front door of Beaumont Hospital. The event was attended by transplant recipients, the Irish Kidney Association and the Beaumont Transplant Unit healthcare professionals.

The memorial was designed by sculpture artist Dennis Goggin of Strange Boat Donor Foundation fame. Dennis and his wife Martina built the 'Gift of Life' Garden in Salthill, Co. Galway. Dennis was the winner of our Artistic Challenge Competition, announced in the Summer edition of *SUPPORT*.

This memorial pays a fitting tribute to all organ donors – both living and deceased – whose generous gift of organ donation has saved and transformed the lives of others and has resulted in over 5000 kidney transplants performed in Ireland since the beginning of the programme in 1964.

Many thanks to the Technical Services Department and the expertise of the Beaumont Hospital gardeners and grounds staff for the beautiful bedding that showcases the memorial so well.



Tomás O'Dowd



“Defying the odds”

Parents of a young dialysis boy from Couminole, Dunquin near the Blasket Islands in the West Kerry Gaeltacht are sharing his health story in support of Organ Donor Awareness Week 2018

Amanda and Denis O'Dowd's four year old son, Tomás, has defied the odds as he was given zero chance of survival when, at just 22 weeks into Amanda's pregnancy, it was discovered there was a blockage in the Uretra valve to Tomás's kidney, known as Posterior Urethral valve. The blockage resulted in a lack of amniotic fluid causing under development of his lungs and severe damage to both his kidneys."

His mother Amanda explains, "When I was 22 weeks pregnant it was discovered in my local hospital in Tralee that there was no amniotic fluid around my baby and that his kidneys were severely damaged and his lungs had stopped growing. I was immediately sent to a maternity hospital in Dublin where I underwent a thorough scan and was told the devastating news that my baby would not survive at birth.

"I had to carry Tomás for another four months to full term with little hope of his survival. My other son Micheál who is now six years old was a toddler at the time. Miraculously Tomás reached 38 weeks gestation and was born at Cork University

Maternity Hospital fighting for his life. He was immediately brought to the paediatric intensive care as he had severely under-developed lungs and needed to be kept on life-support to help his lungs mature.

The first few days were very worrying as Tomás's life hung in the balance. His condition deteriorated and on day three medics in ICU spoke with us about preparing for the worst and the possibility of having to switch off his life support as his lungs were collapsing and by then he was relying on 100% oxygen supply. He also had not produced urine, a worrying sign that his kidneys were not functioning.

But on the following day, it was as though another miracle had happened as Tomás turned a corner and his lungs started working on their own and he passed urine for the first time.

When he was 2 weeks old, Tomás was transferred to Our Lady's Hospital for Sick Children in Crumlin where it was confirmed he had end stage kidney failure. Medics cautioned us that his chances of survival still hung in the balance. Consultant Mary Waldron at Our Lady's Hospital, took over his care observing at the time 'that he is a real fighter'.

Tomás was not considered strong enough to survive an operation to unblock his kidney tube until he was three months old. The first year of his life was very difficult with lots of health scares and uncertainty about his chances of survival.

My family would like to acknowledge the outstanding care given to Tomás since birth, from his first two weeks in the Cork University Hospital paediatric intensive care unit under the fantastic professor Tony Ryan and his team and the excellent care by Dr Mary Waldron Nephrologist and her team in Our Lady's Children's Hospital Crumlin. Without their steadfast commitment and medical excellence Tomás would not be here today. We are also grateful to our local GP in Dingle, Dr Clodagh Kenny, for guiding me through a very difficult

and extremely sensitive few months of pregnancy that was given no hope.

Our beautiful son has defied all the odds and has become stronger and grown into a lovely little boy over the past four years. To all the world he looks like a normal four year old boy. Tomás needs a feeding tube as he has no appetite because of the kidney failure, and this helps him to put on weight and receive the good nutrition needed to be considered well enough to undergo a kidney transplant operation.

Despite only having 5% kidney function, all through his short life, he has soldiered on. In January this year he commenced nightly automated peritoneal dialysis (APD) treatment at home, which he undergoes 6 nights a week for 9 and a half hours at a time. The treatment is working fairly well for him and he makes regular visits to Crumlin Hospital and more recently we have also started to attend Temple Street Children's Hospital where he is being assessed for entry onto the transplant waiting list. Several members of our family are eager to commence the living donor kidney screening process in the hope that one of us will be a suitable living donor.

"Tomás is a happy little boy but has been fighting for survival since before he was born and it's a miracle he has come this far. A transplant would give Tomás a completely new lease of life allowing him to enjoy a normal childhood away from dialysis. He would no longer be unwell or need a feeding tube and he would develop an appetite. His development would no longer be hindered. I would encourage everyone to consider becoming an organ donor."

In support of the Kerry Branch of the IKA and to help raise awareness about organ donation, Amanda is organising a coffee morning and cake sale at Gáirdín Mhuire beside St. Mary's Church, Green St, Dingle on Easter Sunday, 1st April from 11am - 2pm, which marks the beginning of Organ Donor Awareness Week 2018.

ASSUMPTIONS



By MIKE KELLY

Often in life we tend to see things as we want to see them rather than the way they are. Let me illustrate this with an example...and this is a true story!

Some time ago a friend stopped at a motorway services for a break and a cup of tea. She bought the tea and a Kit Kat. The services were very busy and when she looked around every seat seemed to be taken. She then spotted an empty seat, noting that the other seat was occupied.

She sat down. She sipped her tea, opened the Kit Kat and broke off a finger. She then noticed the other person's hand coming across the table. They broke off a finger of the Kit Kat and ate it! My friend was taken aback by their action and said silently "how dare they."

Brusquely she broke off the third finger of the Kit Kat. Shortly thereafter the other person took the final finger and ate it. My friend's reaction; shock and indignation but she said nothing.

A few minutes later the other person got up, went up to the counter and bought themselves a donut. When they returned to the table, my friend got up to leave.

Internally she was fuming, thought about saying something but decided not to. As she was leaving the restaurant she decided she could not let this go without saying or doing something. With her emotions in full flow she walked back to the table, picked up the donut, took a large bite out of it, put it back on the plate and walked away feeling pleased with herself and saying to herself "that taught them a lesson." When she got back to her car she opened her handbag to retrieve her keys. As she was looking in her bag she discovered her Kit Kat!

An honest mistake? Certainly. In all probability if we were in the same position we might behave in a similar way or

perhaps we would confront the situation. Yet if we look at this event from another perspective, what else might have been going on?

MAKING ASSUMPTIONS

It is very easy to make an assumption about something or someone. Once we have made an assumption we find it remarkably difficult to change that opinion or question that assumption. Francis Bacon, writing back in the 17th century, put it very well when he wrote; "the human understanding when it has once adopted an opinion draws all things else to support and agree with it."

In the scenario outlined above my friend knew she had bought a Kit Kat and assumed the Kit Kat on the table was hers, after all, in her mind, she had just bought it! Hence her indignant reaction to the behaviour of the other person. At no point did she think the Kit Kat might not be hers. She believed her assumption and let's be honest, most, if not all of us, would behave in the same way, making and believing our assumption that because we bought one, then the one on the table in front of our eyes had to be ours.

BEWARE OF ASSUMPTIONS

Not all assumptions are wrong, in fact some may be spot on and correct. The truth is that in life we make assumptions about all sorts of people and things. I, for example, am making the assumption you are reading this article. You may have ignored this article or have skipped these pages and are reading another section of the magazine!

Once we accept an assumption we

DON'T MAKE ASSUMPTIONS

begin down a road that can quickly lead to judgements. We have all met or heard people speak of others in a judgemental way. Their judgement is based on an assumption, for example, assuming that a person's dress, ideas, accent, colour of skin, etc defines who they are and how they behave. They become pigeonholed based on an assumption, an assumption that is often false. From judgement the next step on the road is prejudice with all the implications this has. This bias, often based on a false assumption, can, as Francis Bacon pointed out all those centuries ago, be very hard to change.

When there is a conflict between the assumptions we hold and evidence which may challenge these assumptions, we adopt a mode of thinking which can be summed up in three words: discount, distort and deflect.

If we receive information that does not fit our assumption we often discount it, exclude it from thinking and forget it. Sometimes we can employ a different mechanism: distort the information we receive.

When we do this we attempt to twist the facts so that they fit in with the way we think and view the world. If they don't fit they are discounted.

A third method is to deflect information. In this case we recognise and acknowledge the information we receive conflicts with our assumption but rather than heed it, we pay no attention to it and dismiss it.

The employment of one or all of these methods is subtle, overrides our rational thinking and sometimes is difficult to spot and challenge.

IS THERE ANYTHING WE CAN DO TO CHALLENGE OUR ASSUMPTIONS?

To challenge our assumptions involves some effort on our part. Sometimes we can be very clear that the evidence before our eyes conflicts with the assumption we hold. When this happens it is important to

consider the evidence rather than slipping into discounting, distorting or deflecting it. If we can sift the evidence it may lead us to the conclusion that the assumption we hold needs to be changed or modified in some way.



We all have preferences. We may like one type of food over another, one type of drink over another, one type of holiday over another. When it comes to assumptions, it helps to recognise how our preferences may colour our assumption. If we have knowledge of and are aware of our preferences, we can, when it comes to an assumption, exclude them.

Particular situations in life can arouse strong emotions in us. It is as if they are alive in us and therefore they will influence how we think and feel. This influence can colour our assumptions, which, if not recognised and challenged, can lead to bias and judgement.

Finally, always be aware of and check out your assumptions. They may be correct but could also be wrong which can result in...well, chomping away at someone's else donut!

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**"Begin challenging your own assumptions.
Your assumptions are your windows on the world.
Scrub them off every once in a while or the light won't come in."**

— Alan Alda

The Irish Kidney Association provides a FREE and confidential counselling service for those on treatment, their families and carers, either through their counsellor, based at Donor House, or through a nationally registered, locally-based counsellor network.

If, as a person on treatment, family member or carer, you feel it would be of benefit to you to speak to a counsellor or if you would like a referral to a counsellor in your local area please contact Mike at Donor House.

Mike can be contacted

at **Donor House** on

01-6205306

or by email: **mike@ika.ie**

Galway man and recently retired Gort hurler, who donated a kidney to his brother, marked the first anniversary of the successful kidney transplant with a fashion show which he organised along with his fiancée.



Gort hurler Gerry Quinn in action.
Photo: Ray Ryan, SPORTSFILE

BROTHERS IN ARMS

Last March Gerry Quinn, from Gort, donated a kidney to his brother John after the latter had been on dialysis for over a year. 2017 was a record year for living donor kidney transplants with 51 being carried out at Beaumont Hospital.

The Quinn brothers' story is, thankfully, a very positive one in that there was a family member who was a match and willing to donate. Unfortunately for hundreds of other dialysis patients across Ireland, who do not have a live donor available to them, they must await that phone call relaying the news that a deceased donor has become available.

This was, in fact, John Quinn's second kidney transplant as he underwent a similar operation sixteen years ago when he received the organ from a deceased donor. Gerry Quinn says that although he was naturally a little bit apprehensive about undergoing such a major operation he was

glad to be able to come to his brother's aid. "It is hard to watch somebody that sick. John was on home dialysis but he was just constantly drained of energy. He would most likely have been two to three years waiting for a donor, and to me he seemed to be getting sicker and sicker. He had no life really, and it is difficult to watch that."

Three of the family initially went to be tested to see if they were suitable to donate, but Gerry says he had a feeling he was going to be a match. "It was like a sixth sense." He then went through rigorous physical and mental testing to ensure all was in order before the transplant could take place. "After they test you, there is a fairly formal interview process to ensure you are fully aware of what you are doing, and they speak to you, in-depth, about the after-effects of the operation. They are under obligation to warn you of potential complications beforehand."



John Quinn

Photo: John Kelly, Clare Champion

He outlines how speaking to someone who had undergone the operation previously was a great comfort. "The same day I got word I was a match, I arranged to meet a man in Ennis, whom I knew had also donated to his brother. He was very encouraging and had recovered so well. The whole story was so positive it gave me great confidence and put my mind completely at ease – and to be honest I did not think much more about it then after that."

There is always a worry in situations like this that the kidney will not 'take' – that the receiver's system will reject it. "To be honest while I was obviously a little nervous beforehand, I think John was more nervous than me. I suppose from his point of view there is a worry that it will not take, but he was also worried about what I was putting myself through. I think I was more ready for it than him!"

Gerry pays tribute to the team of professionals who took care of himself and his brother in Beaumont Hospital – the National Kidney Transplant Centre. "They are a phenomenal team of people. They knew inside a few hours the kidney had taken well by how John's system started to respond. Gerry says he knew straight away when he saw him that the operation had been successful and had worked. "His colour had completely changed. It was amazing. He was quite literally a new man."

"It is a nice story – and John is one of the lucky ones. He is lucky there was someone within the family who

was a match, and we are both lucky to be back in good health again. When you go up to Beaumont and see people who are so sick, it really makes you appreciate your health."

He refers to the support offered from the IKA. "The IKA has a Renal Support Centre, located on the grounds of Beaumont, that is available for family members to stay at all times during the lead up to the operation and throughout the recovery period. It proved to be great if we had to travel up the night before if you have an early morning appointment.

Coming from the west, this was brilliant for us.

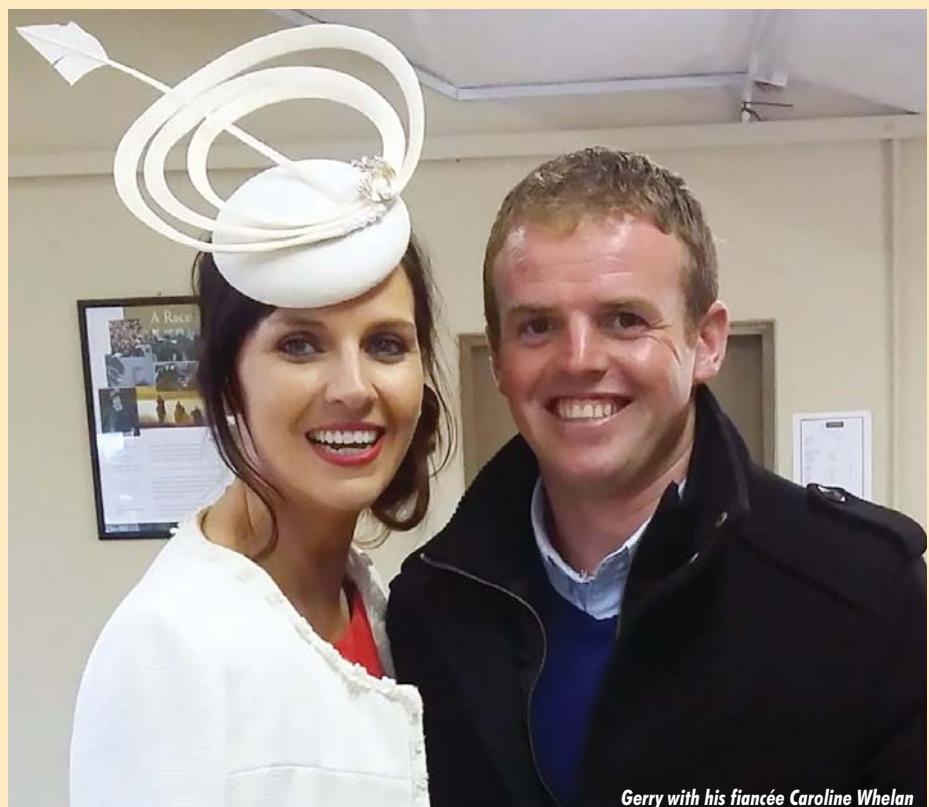
The family used it during the transplant operation also – it is super because the house is literally a hundred yards from the hospital door, so they can be popping back and forward. It is great to be able to stay nearby. It just means that with all that is going on, you do not have to be thinking about accommodation on top of that."

Gerry helped to organise a fundraising event for the IKA, *An Evening of Fashion and Fizz*, held at Sullivan's Hotel in Gort on March 24th 2017 which marked a year since his kidney donation to his brother.

Many of Galway's top boutiques showcased at the event which included a prosecco reception and Fashion Show with Catwalk Model Agency.

Possibly unusually for a man, the charity initiative is a fashion show! Gerry explained, "It is really my fiancée, Caroline Whelan, who organised it. She works in events and loves fashion so it was a no brainer.

Unfortunately there will always be people who need to avail of the IKA. If everyone who comes out of a situation like ours did one small thing, that would make a huge difference. It is only when you have been through it that it resonates with you, but no one knows what their future holds."



Gerry with his fiancée Caroline Whelan

REBEL GRANDADS WITH A CAUSE



Donal O'Flynn, Dermot O'Connell and Charlie Keane

Three grandfathers from the rebel county, ages 67, 70 and 77 who, between them, have clocked up 13 years of dialysis treatment at Cork University Hospital, have proved that age is no barrier for a second chance of life, as they were all called for their life-saving kidney transplants recently.

Two of the Corkmen, Charlie Keane and Dermot O'Connell, aged 67 and 70 respectively, underwent their transplants at Beaumont Hospital within hours of one another under the same Transplant Surgeon, Dilly Little. Although the two men had not known one another previously, they have now forged a friendship which will endure for the rest of their lives as they thank the same deceased donor for

their 'gift of life'.

Dermot said, "It was a huge coincidence that another patient, Charlie who, like me, also attended dialysis treatment at the same hospital was called for a kidney transplant on the same day.

"Remarkably, it took ten days for the transplant kidneys to start working properly in both of us and we were carefully monitored and required three dialysis treatments before the kidneys

functioned on their own. Our surgeon Dilly Little surmised that our lazy kidneys just needed time to wake up.

"Sharing the same donors kidneys is such an unique life-altering experience and Charlie and I have become friends since."

While still in recovery after his transplant, Dermot from Glanmire, was delighted to hear just weeks later, in early January 2018, that his elder dialysis friend Donal O'Flynn from Ovens,

had also been called for his life-altering kidney transplant operation. Donal and Dermot had been friends for over three years as they were both on the same early morning dialysis shift at CUH, three days a week for their four hour treatments.

Donal, the eldest of the three men, had spent a lengthy nine years receiving dialysis treatment before his transplant came along while Dermot, the second eldest, had been undergoing his treatment for three and a half years. The wait was not as long for Charlie, from Blarney Street in Cork city, as he was only receiving his dialysis treatment for 9 months before he was called for his transplant.

Dermot says: "I know that I also speak for my two friends when I say that the three of us are immensely grateful to our deceased donors and their families for our renewed health and the second chance at life that we can now enjoy with our families."

Donal then added, "At 77 years of age and having spent nine years on the transplant waiting list, I had resigned myself to being on dialysis for the rest of my days and I did not hold out much hope for a transplant. I was heartened to hear the news that my friend, Dermot, who is 7 years younger than me and whom I had got to know while attending the same 7am dialysis shift, was called for his kidney transplant before Christmas."

The retired telephone production supervisor said, "my transplant has transformed my life and I am no longer tied to a timetable around dialysis. I feel like a much younger man than I had for such a long time. I now can look

forward to the impending arrival of my sixth grandchild and spending more quality time with my wife Helen and my growing family.

Without the generosity of my donor my prospects would have been very different. I thank my donor.

great for my physical and mental health."

The retired Eircom manager continued, "With the help of a great team at CUH including consultant nephrologist Liam Plant, as well as medication, diet and lifestyle changes, keeping active and fit, it

driver kept me calm on the journey as he chatted away with me. By 6pm that evening I had woken up from my transplant operation feeling no pain.

My way to thank and honour my donor is to continue to embrace the extended life that I have



Donal, Dermot and Charlie beside the statues of Cha and Miah, characters from the old satirical TV Series from the 70s and early 80s 'Hall's Pictorial Weekly'

I would also like to acknowledge my transplant surgeon, Richard Power at Beaumont Hospital, all the medical and nursing staff that have cared for me as well as all the friends I made at CUH when I was receiving treatment. I experienced huge support and comradery amongst patients in the dialysis community and I keep in touch with my old friends in the dialysis ward."

Charlie, a fitness enthusiast and the youngest of the three men said, "When I received the diagnosis that my kidneys were failing over 16 years ago, instead of letting it get me down, I decided to take control of my health and became active. I took up swimming every day and in the last couple of years I also attended the gym. I found that keeping fit was

wasn't until 9 months before my transplant that my kidney function had declined to a point where I could no longer continue without dialysis treatment. I have been very fortunate that the dialysis worked very well for me and I was grateful that it was keeping me alive and allowed me to carry on as normal

I know that I am also very lucky not to have had to wait longer than 9 months for my transplant which came on the week of my birthday and before Christmas. I was undergoing dialysis on a Sunday morning when at 7.30am I received a call from the transplant coordinator in Beaumont saying they had a kidney match for me. I finished my dialysis session and was brought to Dublin by taxi and I remember the taxi

been given by keeping active through swimming and continuing to appreciate spending more time with my wife, Caroline and my family including my four lovely grandchildren. I now have made a new friend in Dermot. We have a unique friendship now as we each have both experienced organ failure and can be grateful to the same deceased donor for our transplants. We are now kidney twins!"

Grandfather Dermot is also grateful for the unique Christmas gift he received three months ago, the 'gift of life', which has given him a new lease of life. The retired Senior Probation Officer and stalwart member and former Chairman of Glanmire Football Club had been undergoing dialysis

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treatment at Cork University Hospital for three and a half years prior to his life-changing transplant which he received in December 2017.

Five years ago, while at one of the many fundraising events Dermot had helped organise for his local GAA football club, a Golf Classic at Fota Island Golf Club, he decided to avail of the free blood pressure clinic at the golf outing that the event sponsors Pharmacy First Plus had provided. A red flag was raised when it was revealed that his blood pressure was very high which resulted in him getting further tests and the diagnosis that he was in end stage kidney failure. He was taken under the care of the nephrology team at Cork University Hospital and managed to stave off dialysis treatment for over a year until eventually he commenced hospital dialysis treatment.

Dermot explained, "The treatment which I underwent three times a week, for four hours at a time, worked well for me and I was happy to commence dialysis at 7am as by doing this early shift it didn't interrupt my daily routine greatly, as I still had a large part of the day left and the

dialysis treatment gave me more energy. However, I did have a restricted diet and had to work my life around dialysis and the restrictions that kidney failure brings."

An unforgettable Christmas surprise came out of the blue when Dermot received a call around midnight in December 2017 telling him that he was to make a journey, as soon as possible, to Beaumont Hospital to undergo a kidney transplant. His son Patrick drove him to Dublin and they got a Garda escort in Dublin to speedily get them to the hospital.

"While my dialysis treatment was working well for me and keeping me alive, I was always hoping that I would be fortunate to get a kidney transplant. My prayers were answered in December when I received the best Christmas gift anyone could hope for, the 'gift of life', from a stranger family whom I will never meet. It is such a marvellous and selfless sacrifice for the grieving family of my deceased donor to make and it is difficult to express my gratitude. I feel so much better since my transplant and enjoy a better quality of life, away from dialysis treatment, and I no longer have a restricted diet.

"I would like to acknowledge the

support I have received from the IKA and the staff in the dialysis unit in Cork University Hospital. I would also like to express my extreme gratitude for the wonderful care I experienced from the medical and nursing staff at Mallow Hospital and Cork University Hospital including Consultant Nephrologist Dr. Eva Long and dialysis staff and specialist renal nurses Teresa, Phil and Abina. My thanks also to my Transplant Surgeon Dilly Little and her team at Beaumont Hospital for their medical excellence. Dr. Grufferty has been my caring doctor for over 30 years. My exceptional caring wife Nellie has been my rock through my health journey over the past five years and I'd also like to thank my children - Maria, Patrick, Claire, Brendan and Bryan - for their love and support. It is because of my kidney donor that I have a new lease of life and I can enjoy spending more time with my eight grandchildren who give me tremendous joy. I would encourage everyone to support organ donation."

The three men will attend the Cork launch of the Organ Donor Awareness Week campaign by rugby great Tomás O'Leary, which will be held at the Rochestown Park Hotel on Thursday 29th March (at 6.30pm).

ORGAN FREEMAN SHOW



Living kidney donor Cassandra O'Brien from Navan was a special guest of comedian Jarlath Regan after his show Organ Freeman in January. Jarlath's show theme is based on his experience in donating a kidney to his brother Adrian last year. The show was held at Vicar Street.

Cassandra donated a kidney to her son Jack in 2005 and at the time they were the youngest parent and child to undergo a living donor kidney transplant in Ireland. She was just 20 years old and Jack was just two.

She is now studying Social Science in Maynooth and hopes to work in the charity sector or in policy making.

Cassandra is organising organ donor awareness events at Maynooth Campus to mark Organ Donor Awareness Week 2018.

Give the Gift of Life



Garda members, and siblings, Shane and Roselyn Moloney, reflect on their family's decision to donate their mother's organs and the importance of organ donation.

Garda members Shane and Roselyn Moloney's mother, Rose, sadly passed away in early Spring last year and the family made the selfless decision to donate her organs.

Shane Moloney said, "When I got the phone call from my father informing me that mam had taken ill, I knew from what he was describing to me that the prognosis was not positive.

"We were eventually brought into a family room at the hospital by a number of doctors who had the unfortunate task of delivering us with life-changing news...Mam wouldn't

recover. Dealing with sudden death, personally and professionally, I understand the importance of breaking bad news; break the bad news badly and you'll never be forgotten, break the bad news well and you'll always be remembered. They will be remembered.

"Organ donation was brought up by the medical staff and without hesitation we agreed to do it. As we set out making our unfortunate phone calls to friends and family we took great comfort knowing that as we made ours, other families around the country were receiving very different phone calls. Families were getting second chances, and that's

what life is about, second chances.

"The topic of organ donation is not an easy issue to discuss with loved ones but it's important to be as open as possible and express your wishes. Consent is never presumed, even if a donor card has been signed. Have the chat.

"Donation is new opportunities; donation is new possibilities; donation is new memories."

Roselyn Moloney said, "The doctors told us that there was nothing more they could do for mum as she had a massive bleed on the brain. They then asked about organ donation and without hesitation, dad, in consultation with us, made the brave decision and informed them to take whatever organs they needed. If she was gone from us, maybe other families could benefit from our sudden loss. As heart breaking as it was, we were all in agreement.

"We spoke with a lovely lady Caroline, the organ donor co-ordinator and she went through the process with us and reaffirmed that mum would be treated with respect and dignity throughout. What stood out the most to me was the number of families, 77, that made the decision to donate their loved ones' organs in 2016. Those 77 families made the same decision as us and saved the lives of 280 people.

"Mum's organs; her lung, liver and a kidney were transplanted successfully and three people benefited from her generosity. Her heart valves were also retained for use on premature babies.

"I am humbled in the knowledge that three lives were enhanced due to my beautiful mum's organ donation. What is better than to pass on the 'gift of life' to another? We are all on this earth to make it a better place, let our organs keep working on in others when our time comes.

Give the 'gift of life'.

Reprinted courtesy Garda Review

Reah and Aaron Higgins of Caher take time out with their sons, Stephen and Fionn, at Lough Graney.
Photo: John Kelly, Clare Champion



A PERFECT MATCH

in every way

By
CAROL BYRNE
Clare Champion

When Reah Hedrich met Aaron Higgins for the first time 20 years ago and he asked for a kiss, she shied away from him. Little did she know, then, that the two would reunite in 2006 and make the perfect match!

In fact, the couple were more of a match than they originally thought and, when Aaron's health took a dramatic turn, resulting in him going on dialysis, Reah didn't think twice about offering him a kidney.

Now, 12 months on from a successful transplant procedure, the couple and their two children, Fionn and Stephen, are enjoying the new lease of life the operation has given their family.

Aaron has a condition known as Focal Segmental Glomerulosclerosis (FSGS). It causes scar tissue to develop in the kidneys, which limits the filtration process and can lead to kidney failure.

Aaron started to display symptoms when he was in his late teens but he wasn't diagnosed until much later. The couple, who are now in their 30s and live in Caher, have seen Aaron's health deteriorate over the past five years.

In 2015, he commenced on dialysis treatment in University Hospital Limerick.

"I was sick for years but the last five years were the worst. I had gout and couldn't move my hands, which is all associated with it. I was on dialysis for two years," he said.

Once on dialysis, Aaron was placed on the waiting list for a kidney transplant but, even before that, Reah wanted to be tested and give him her kidney.

"I knew I needed a transplant years ago but, because you are young, they make you withstand whatever you are going through for as long as you can sustain it. I was at 5% kidney function when I went on dialysis. My kidneys weren't cleaning the poison out of my body so that's why I was getting gout. I had to watch what I was eating, I couldn't have a coffee, all that kind of stuff – and the minute I did, I got sick straight away. I was very tired, I was yellow and had red eyes. I weighted 73 kilos – I'm 103 now – and I

would get very bad cramps," Aaron explained.

Reah said that even before Aaron went on dialysis she was used to receiving calls to say an ambulance was bringing Aaron to hospital. She always had to have her phone with her. But once Aaron was on the transplant list, Reah was anxious that she would be tested to see if she was a match.

"We had a conversation one day and said, 'let's just keep everyone else out of it and it will be more personal, less stress, less people having to get involved' and it just worked out. Reah wrote a three-page letter to the doctors and then they went for it," Aaron said.

Reah said she knew the chances of being a match were slim but, if there was a chance, she wanted to be the person to donate.

"The one thing that makes me feel uncomfortable is when they talk of it as the 'gift of life' but, to me, that makes it a bigger thing. When you see someone you love, who is so ill, you don't hesitate to put yourself forward. Death is such a small risk and, with a general anaesthetic, there is always a risk. You don't think about it, you just do it. He's here, that's all that matters," she said.

Siblings have just a 25% chance of being an exact match. The chances are less if it is a spouse, so Reah and Aaron consider themselves very lucky.

"In October 2016, we went up for the start of the process. The first thing was that the bloods matched; then they do tissue testing. I wasn't nervous, I was willing to just do it. It never even crossed my mind not to go for it. I never got nervous about it and I did wonder is that normal or am I living in a bubble," Reah explained.

Aaron said his family couldn't believe her kindness and even he couldn't comprehend it.

"She was okay about it but I didn't want her to do it at all. We were all surviving away when I got sick but, if she got sick, I didn't know what we would do as a family," he said.

Reah said they received great support from the transplant coordinators at Beaumont, who guided them through the process, including the potential for a negative outcome, and this helped both of us to make the decision to go ahead.

"Aaron struggled with it more than I but the Coordinators prepare you for

it. I was just so determined and calm. They do give you the option before they give you the anaesthetic that, if you don't want to do it, you can back out. So they take that pressure off you right up to the very end, ensuring that you have that option to say no," Reah outlined. She added that Aaron could have also stopped it up to that point. There were other considerations too, of course, and, with two children, the decision was not an easy one.

In October 2016, we went up for the start of the process. The first thing was that the bloods matched; then they do tissue testing. I wasn't nervous, I was willing to just do it. It never even crossed my mind not to go for it. I never got nervous about it and I did wonder is that normal or am I living in a bubble?

"We felt we should be open with the kids and let them know what was happening in a child-friendly way so there were no secrets but they were upset. We brought them to the cinema the week before the surgery and the older boy, in the car on the way home he said, 'when you are going up to the hospital, what if you die?' You have to go through all that – what if Daddy dies and what if you both die?" Reah said. She added that their friends and community in Caher and Flagmount rallied around them, staging fundraisers.

"I don't know how we would have managed without that support and it allowed us to keep family life as normal as possible. I was the only one working so it was massive to have that," she continued.

Reah's surgery was scheduled for 8am on January 30, 2017, and she was out by 3pm. Doctors told her that the moment her kidney was transplanted, it just swelled up and started pumping and that it was an extremely healthy kidney.

Aaron said there was an immediate difference when he came around after surgery.

"I walked past a mirror and I had to go back and look in and I thought, 'Jesus Christ, is that me?' I called people over to look at my face – my colouring was completely different, I was like a different person. My vision was better after a couple of days and my hearing and sense of smell were really strong. My normal creatinine level was 950, the next day after the transplant, the creatinine level was down at 200 and the following day it was down to 110," he said.

Although the surgery was a success, there is always a risk of rejection, as the couple points out, and the risk was always there that Reah would have given away a kidney and there would be no gain for Aaron.

After three days, Aaron developed symptoms of mild rejection and was put on more medication to counteract that.

Reah said, when they heard the word rejection, their hearts sank but, with medication, they got over that initial hurdle, although it remained a possibility.

"Transplantation is not a cure, it is a treatment. But he has had the transplant and he will be on anti-rejection tablets for life and they do impact on your immune system so you are prone to infection, and cancers, particularly skin cancer is a massive risk with transplant recipients. That's the piece that people sometimes don't really realise. People think once you've had the transplant, everything is wonderful. The quality of life is still a lot better but Aaron, like all transplanted people, has to wear factor 50 sun barrier cream everyday, even on a dull day," Reah said.

She explained that the Transplant Coordinators prepared them for the fact that the kidney might be rejected.

"The reality of it is that it might reject tomorrow. There is a chance but, fingers crossed, it will be long-lasting," Reah said.

Continued...

She explained that the lifespan of a live donated kidney is approximately 20 to 25 years, whereas it is roughly 10 to 15 years for one from a deceased donor.

For Reah, it was an adjustment. She said she has recovered well from the surgery, with her remaining kidney expected to grow to compensate for the loss of the other.

Rather than removing Aaron's non-functioning kidneys, the Consultants attached Reah's donated kidney to an artery.

"They considered removing both kidneys but they said it is invasive, so they left them in which is the normal procedure and now my new kidney is attached to an artery in my leg instead," Aaron said.

The couple said that, although the experience was harrowing and challenging, both before and after surgery, they received tremendous support from their community, their family, and from the IKA's Renal Support Centre, the Renal Team and the Transplant Coordinators.

Travelling from County Clare to Dublin was an ordeal and the couple said that having the IKA's Renal Support Centre's facility made this so much easier on them as a family.

"It is like a self-catering hotel. Family were able to come up and stay, I was also able to stay after surgery. It was amazing. It was expensive to go up and down and then a hotel on top of that, so having a place to stay took all that stress away. It made such a difference," Reah said.

She emphasised that she will never regret her decision, as it has been 'life-changing'.

"It is an individual decision and, I think, if you don't want to do it, then that is totally ok and should be respected. No one should feel under pressure to do it," she said.

Aaron said life feels different for him now because there are almost too many possibilities for him.

"It is strange because now I can do whatever I want but I'm not sure what I want to do," he said.

Reah adds, "Aaron was out with the kids playing on the trampoline yesterday and there is no way he would be doing that before. These are things that you have to remind yourself of."

Aaron said that family life has improved and he has noticed that the boys are also interacting with him a lot more since the surgery.

He was so appreciative of the gift

his wife gave him that each month he gets her flowers, with a message saying, 'Thanks for the kidney'.

"I met Reah when I was 14. She was way taller than me and I asked her for a kiss and she said 'no way'. Now we are married and I have her kidney," Aaron laughed.

He added that, since the surgery, he has put on four stone, something he is still getting used to. He's started to get back to work and doing things he enjoys, like Taekwondo.

"Obviously, you need to mind yourself and not get kicked in the kidney," he laughed.

The couple were honoured to be asked to attend an event earlier this year at Beaumont, when a memorial garden was opened by Minister for Health Simon Harris, in recognition of all organ donors. They were invited to meet with the minister and Aaron was subsequently featured on the front page of the National Renal Transplant Service Annual Report for 2016.

Reah and Aaron advise anyone who may be facing a similar process or trying to make these difficult situations to do their homework and engage with the local branch of the IKA or Head Office, if they prefer.

Reprinted courtesy of Clare Champion

Annual Service of REMEMBRANCE & THANKSGIVING

WILL TAKE PLACE ON

SATURDAY 6th OCTOBER 2018

AT

12.00PM

IN

CORPUS CHRISTI CHURCH,

HOME FARM ROAD,

DUBLIN 9



Bouncing Back

Noretta Clifford



Just over a month ago (early February 2018), mother of one Noretta Clifford (37) from Ennis, Co Clare (a native of Cahersiveen, Co Kerry) underwent a life-changing kidney transplant following two years of dialysis treatment which followed the birth of her young son. She is now bouncing back to good health thanks to the 'gift of life' which she received from a deceased organ donor.

Noretta was diagnosed with Glomerulonephritis in her early teens which led to a slow deterioration of her kidney function over the two decades that followed. Her condition was carefully managed and she and her husband Shane McGoldrick, both eager to start a family, attended pre-conception counselling which helped them prepare for the likely impact of pregnancy in the progression of her kidney disease. Noretta's pregnancy, over three years ago, was carefully monitored by the medical staff whose care she was under.

Baby Séimí was born safe and well albeit two months prematurely. Soon after his birth Noretta commenced peritoneal dialysis treatment, CAPD, which she underwent four times a day. The treatment worked well for her and she managed to continue to work full-time and with the support of her employers, a medical devices company, she could exchange her peritoneal dialysis fluid twice a day while at work and she carried out the other two sessions at home.

Noretta, a Biochemist, continued to work while undergoing dialysis for over two years. During this time husband Shane had started the process of being worked up for a living kidney donation. However, it was only in the early stages of screening for compatibility when out of the blue one evening, in early February this year, Noretta received a phone call from Beaumont Hospital telling her that a suitable donor kidney had been found and that she was to quickly make her journey to the hospital for transplant.

Noretta said, "I find that although my transplant is in its early days I already have much more energy. It's wonderful to not have to be tied to a timetable for my four times daily dialysis exchanges. Now, with my renewed health, I can enjoy more quality time with my husband, my son Séimí and the rest of my family and friends. I can look forward to spending more time outdoors without being on the clock."

"I would like to thank all the medical and nursing staff who took such good care of me down through the years from the time I was a teenager attending Temple Street Hospital to when I progressed as an adult patient to the care of Cork University Hospital and most recently, Limerick Hospital.

I received wonderful care from the staff in Beaumont Hospital where I underwent my transplant and I'd like to offer special thanks to transplant surgeon James Forde and the transplant team.

My thanks also to the IKA, members of the Clare branch, as well as the staff at the IKA's Renal Support Centre at Beaumont Hospital, which provides accommodation for patients and their families when attending hospital appointments. My parents Jerry and Mary Clifford, husband Shane, the rest of my family and friends have been steadfast in their love and support for me down through the years.

I would also like to acknowledge my employer and colleagues for their support and understanding throughout my journey with dialysis and transplantation.

"I feel very fortunate to have received a kidney transplant. I extend my heartfelt thanks to the family of the deceased donor who gave me this wonderful gift. I will never forget them as I embrace my good fortune. I hope that by sharing my story I can help others understand the vital importance of organ donation and how it can save and improve the lives of people like me and the legacy it leaves."

By COLIN WHITE



WORLD TRANSPLANT WINTER GAMES & NICHOLAS CUP



Shane and Luke Herlihy

This year the World Transplant Winter Games and the Nicholas Cup were hosted in Anzère, Switzerland from January 7th-12th.

Luke Herlihy from Dublin took part in the Nicholas Cup Camp that runs alongside the Winter Games. The Camp brought together children from across Europe and as far afield as Canada and New Zealand. The concept of the camp is very straightforward – bring together children from around the world who have all received an organ transplant, teach them to ski or snowboard and offer a variety of other activities too. Do it all in an environment where there is appropriate care and medical back-up and basically offer the children an opportunity to be children!





Whilst the concept is simple, the impact can be huge. The opportunity for children to mix with their peers, learn from each other's stories and share the excitement of taking on new, and fun challenges, can be life transforming. The friends that can be made through transplant sports activities are the friends who 'understand' your health journey, friends who can offer moral support when needed, friends who can make your transplant journey easier...

Organ donation is often described as the 'Gift of Life.' Life is made up of so many experiences stitched together and it is the gift of experiences such as the Nicholas Cup that are so enriching. As an adult observing the camp in action one cannot but come away with a deeper appreciation for the simple things in life – friendship, doing things for the first time, enjoying good health.

Luke got to share his experience with his dad, Shane who gave him his kidney. As a living donor, Shane got to compete in a number of the events, the first time in many years that we have had someone from Ireland participating in the Winter Games. He acquitted himself very well on the slopes. It was great to see both Shane and Luke take home medals after their time in Switzerland but more importantly it was great to see them share a wonderful experience together.

The Nicholas Cup and World Transplant Winter Games happen every two years. They will be on in Norway in 2020. With events such as Curling and Snow Shoeing available there are opportunities to take on new challenges that do not necessarily require ski slopes...



GLAMOROUS GRANDMOTHER CELEBRATES 44 YEARS SINCE LIVING DONOR KIDNEY TRANSPLANT

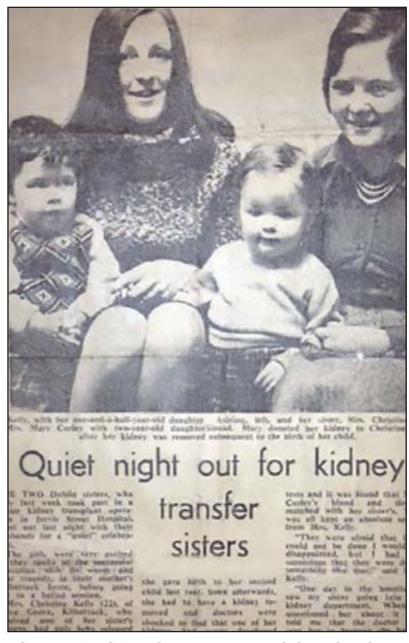


ADUBLIN grandmother is celebrating a remarkable 44 years since receiving a living donor kidney transplant from her late sister. Christine Kelly (67) from Griffith Avenue, Dublin is sharing her story to highlight the success of organ donation and the potential longevity of kidney transplants from living donors. Christine is 'fighting fit' and her donor kidney is still going strong despite several surgeries in recent years to overcome other health issues including cancer, heart surgery and a hip replacement.

Christine is one of the first people to undergo a living donor kidney transplant in Ireland and the operation took place at Jervis Street Hospital on March 1st, 1974, on the second wedding anniversary of Christine's marriage to husband Martin. The living donor programme commenced two years previously in 1972 at Jervis Street Hospital. Their operation was recorded in press coverage at the time.

Sadly Christine's donor sister Mary, a mother of five children, passed away following breast cancer eighteen years ago.

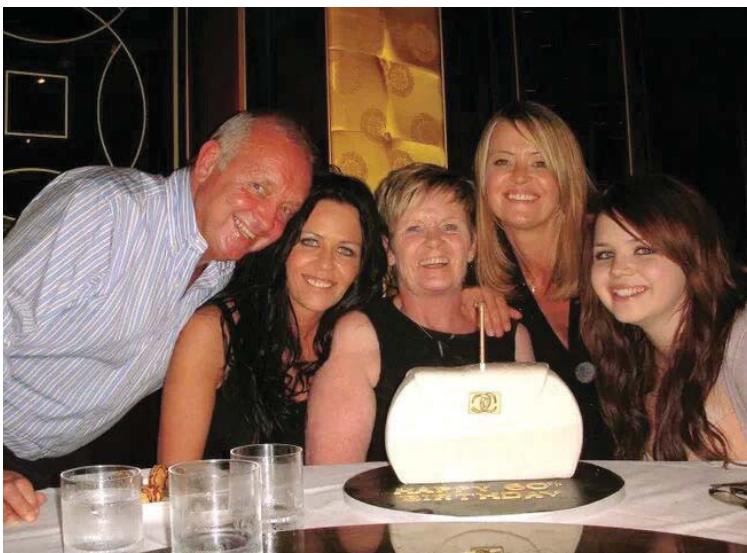
Christine's daughter Sinead Kelly paid tribute to her late aunt Mary, "My mother was the second person to undergo a living kidney transplant in Ireland. It is thanks to Mary that my sister and I still have our mother with us today and that her three grandchildren can enjoy her love and support."



Quiet night out for kidney transfer sisters

Left: Two Dublin sisters, who last week took part in a joint kidney transplant operation, with their wives and daughters. They had their last night with their families for a "quiet" celebration. The girls were very excited about the operation afterwards, and now, before surgery, the Dublin sisters, Mrs. Christine Kelly (22), of Castleknock, and Mrs. Grace Kilbride, who were shocked to find that one of her kidneys was removed, are recovering well. One day in the hospital, saw my sister get the transplant done. When she told me that she had been matched with her sister, I was very happy. I was worried that she would be disappointed, but I had nothing to worry about.

Christine (right) with sister Mary and their daughters Aisling and Sinead. Article from Evening Herald.



Above left:
Christine with her cousin
Margaret Johnson.

Left:
Christine on her 60th
birthday with husband
Martin, daughters Fiona
and Sinead and her
granddaughter Lauren.

Right:
Christine with her
grandson Joshua.





Christine with her daughter Sinead

My deceased aunt Mary's children share a great bond with my mother as part of her is still alive in Christine.

At the young age of 22 when I was just one year old, my mother went into renal failure within days of giving birth to my baby sister Fiona. She underwent dialysis for less than a year until Mary, who herself had one child at the time, gave the ultimate gift to her sister, the 'gift of life'. Mary went

on to have four more children after this happy event.

My mother always remembers to express her gratitude to Mary and on the anniversary of her transplant she sent flowers to Mary, before she passed away, and now marks the important event by putting flowers on her grave."

"My mother is fighting fit and enjoying life to the full. Decades after

her transplant my mother also fought breast cancer and had two preventative surgeries as she carries the same brca1 gene as Mary.

Over five years ago she underwent open heart surgery and she also underwent a hip transplant two years ago. Concerns for the potential risk these major operations would pose to her kidney transplant proved unfounded."

VHI
Women's
Mini Marathon
Sunday 3rd June 2018
at 2.00p.m.

**Are you taking part in this year's
VHI Women's Mini Marathon?**

Please consider getting sponsored
to participate on behalf of the
IRISH KIDNEY ASSOCIATION

ENTER ONLINE AT
www.vhiwomensminimarathon.ie

**CONTACT DEBORAH@IKA.IE FOR
SPONSOR CARDS, T-SHIRTS, ETC.**

Closing date for entries Friday 18th May, 2018
or when maximum number of entries is reached



IKA members Jennifer Flood, Marie Fowley, Martin & Angela Kirwan, Colin Mackenzie, Val & Peggy Eustace, Eddie Flood meet Sabina and President Michael D Higgins.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY AT THE ÁRAS



IKA National Honorary Chairman John Whelan and his wife Una with Sabina and President Michael Higgins



Mike & Mary Kiely, Cork IKA branch



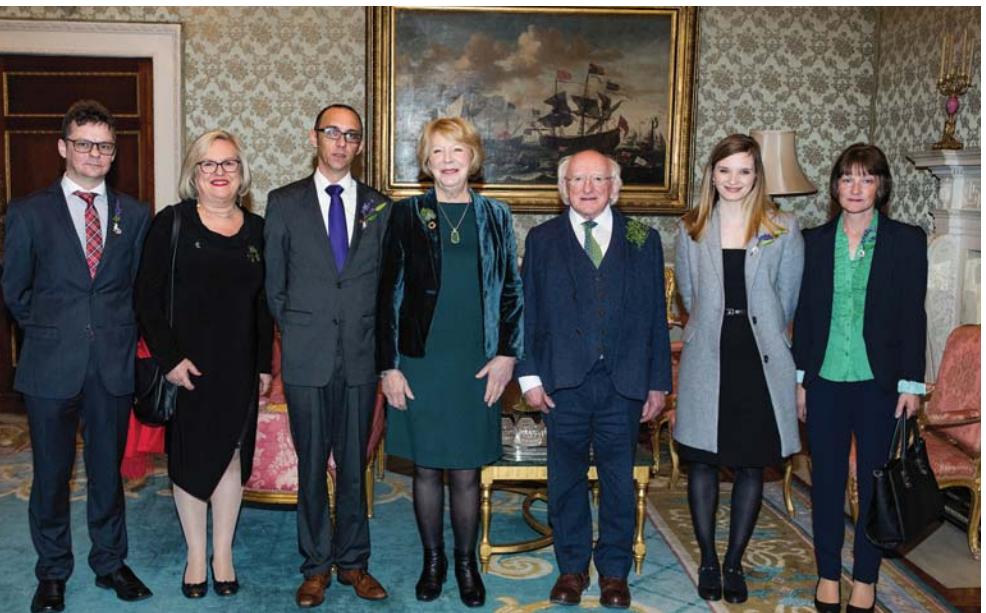
Catherine & Liam Buttelle, Wexford IKA branch

The President Michael D. Higgins and his wife Sabina chose Organ Donation & Transplantation as the theme for a St. Patrick's Day Reception in their home, Áras an Uachtaráin. The Board of the IKA was invited, along with their spouse or plus one. At 4.45pm precisely the gates opened in the Phoenix Park, just as we won the Grand Slam in Twickenham!

From far and wide over 200 guests arrived and entered the State Reception room where we all mingled and chatted. A large queue formed and everyone was announced individually to Michael and Sabina in the Drawing room as photographers waited in attendance.

The group YE Vagabonds entertained us all in the Reception room. Much later than planned the President gave his address to the gathering. Our previous Ambassador Vivienne Traynor was MC on this occasion. Professor Jim Egan responded following the President's address.

It was an honour to be part of such a prestigious occasion. The President and Sabina came out later in the evening to informally meet and greet everyone who had attended. This reception will stand out in everyone's mind on future St. Patrick's Days - when we're invited to the Áras!



Kevin Madden, Patricia May, Eoin Madden, Sabina, Michael D Higgins, Lisa Mellon, Deirdre Heslin



Michael D Higgins and Chloe Murray (7)



Sabina and President Michael Higgins with Minister for Health Simon Harris



Vivienne Traynor (right) with her daughter Holly and mum Phil, with Sabina and President Higgins



Emmett and Crystal Spollen from Kinnegad, Co Westmeath with Sabina and President Higgins



Dr. Atif Awan, Eileen Buckley, Carmel Feeney, Laura Austin, Sabina, President Higgins, Andrea Fitzmaurice, Transplant Surgeon Dilly Little, Monica Cunningham and Dr. James O'Rourke



David Crosby, Cavan, former Meath Minor footballer is pictured with his wife Katie, children Darragh, Erin and Keira with Sabina and President Higgins



Brian Flanagan and Monica Finn, Roscommon IKA branch with Sabina and President Higgins



Kieran and Chloe Murray, Donegal IKA branch with Sabina and President Higgins

DIALYSIS FATHER TO RAISE FUNDS FOR IKA

A father's world was turned upside down in 2016 when he suffered kidney failure. Soon after receiving his shock health diagnosis, Owen Hanrahan (39) had to wind down his small haulage business leaving an uncertain future for his wife Therese and their three sons.

After feeling unwell for some time, Owen Hanrahan, a native of Grangemockler, Tipperary and now living in Killamery, Co Kilkenny, payed a visit to his doctor in July 2016. This led to a shock diagnosis that he had Nephrotic Syndrome and was in kidney failure. He spent over 10 weeks in hospital in Waterford and in this time he saw his weight soar from 11 and half stone to 15 stone due to fluid retention. His kidney function had declined to less than 16% and he commenced dialysis treatment.

Initially he underwent dialysis treatment three times weekly at Fresenius Dialysis Centre in Kilkenny and, in recent months, his three and a half hourly treatments have been reduced to twice weekly. Although the dialysis is working well for him, he is very lethargic with his condition and is hoping to be accepted onto the transplant waiting list in the near future.

"I was overwhelmed and humbled by the support I received from my friends and local community since my diagnosis. As someone who worked hard all my life it was difficult to have to succumb to my illness and wind my business down. However, I hope that I will be able to receive a life-changing kidney transplant which will help turn things around for me and my family. I would encourage everyone to consider organ donation, as like me,



Owen Hanrahan

you never know when organ failure might visit a member of your family. Organ donation saves lives. It is such a selfless decision for families to donate a loved one's organs so that other people, like myself, can benefit from the 'gift of life'."

Owen says, "I was greatly heartened by my community which rallied around me and in a short space of time they raised €17,000, through a Truck Run, to help support me and my young family. This eased the financial burden which was thrust upon us as, like so many other formerly self-employed people, it was difficult to access disability or any other state allowances for almost a year after I ceased working.

I, with the support of friends and some members of the IKA Kilkenny Branch, including Seamus and Arlene Carrigan, are making plans for a Motorcade and Motor exhibition at The Hub at Cillin Hill, Kilkenny. This will include swift cars, trucks and motorbikes and will help to raise funds for the IKA and raise awareness about organ donation."



James, Therese, Matthew, Owen and Paul Hanrahan

Further details of the event, which will be held on Sunday, April 8th, at the end of Organ Donor Awareness Week 2018, are to be advised.

Anyone who would like to take part, take an exhibition stand or enter a vehicle can email kilkennybigevent@outlook.com

BBRAUN WELLSTONE WEXFORD RENAL CARE CENTRE



The Bbraun Wellstone Wexford Renal Care Centre, located at Sinnottstown Lane, Drinagh, Wexford, is now operational and is expected, by May, to operate on a six day week basis.

New Quay, New Life



Front (l-r): Ger Cullen, Imelda McCann, Bernard & Eleanor Quigley, Carmel Cullen, Laurna O'Brien. Back (l-r): Michael John Kerins, Joan O'Brollocain, Gerry Naughton, Fr Colm Clinton and Kathleen Lynn. Missing from photo are: Georgina O'Sullivan and John and Deirdre Haggerty.

Bernard Quigley (66), a retired secondary school principal at Ferbane Community College in County Offaly (and who formerly was a teacher at Tullamore College), received a life-changing kidney transplant in June 2017 after undergoing thirteen months of dialysis treatment and over a decade of declining kidney function. The couple, along with the steadfast support of some friends and family, have raised close to €10,000 for the Irish Kidney Association over the past four years.

Grateful to his donor for his 'gift of life' he and his wife Eleanor, a retired health nurse, who together with a group of friends from the couple's adoptive new home in New Quay, Co. Clare, raised close to €7,000 for the IKA's Renal Support Centre. The Renal Support Centre is located on the

grounds of Beaumont Hospital and provides free temporary accommodation to kidney patients and their families when they attend hospital appointments or are undergoing transplants. No stranger to fundraising, four years ago, Eleanor raised €3,000 for the IKA through a Christmas swim in New Quay, Clare.

A routine visit to his GP, Dr. Gabriel Murphy in Ferbane, twelve years ago, led to a diagnosis that Bernard had a rare congenital kidney disorder known as 'horse shoe kidney' and that his kidney function was gradually declining. Through medical supervision, dietary restrictions and lifestyle changes, Bernard managed to stave off dialysis for over a decade although his kidney function did decline considerably in the final few years before his transplant to a point

where his energy levels were almost depleted, and his quality of life was greatly hindered. He developed diabetes within two years of his kidney diagnosis which required daily injections for a six-month period but, fortunately, his diabetes became dormant and he no longer needed to medicate for it. Bernard explains that, "although my diabetes has returned the kidney transplant has benefited me greatly. I now feel well, have restored energy and enjoy a considerably better quality of life. I have my donor to thank for this!"

Bernard described how, at Halloween 2016, he was called to Beaumont Hospital for a kidney transplant, but it didn't proceed. He explained that, "I was prepped for theatre and at the last minute the transplant operation was called off as



Bernard and his wife Eleanor at the IKA's Renal Support Centre for their cheque presentation

the donor kidney was deemed to be unsuitable for transplant. Although initially I was disappointed, I took heart in knowing that the medical screening process was extremely rigorous, and that the transplant operation would only proceed if there was a real chance of it being a success. I considered the event as just a trial run for what would eventually lead to a successful kidney transplant. Ten months later I underwent my life-changing kidney transplant.”

"Eleanor and I would like to convey our gratitude to the people of New Quay and in the surrounding area who have been so supportive of us both since we came to live in Clare five years ago. I am indebted to my wife Eleanor and our two adult children Bernard Jr. (who is a golf pro in Tullamore) and Naomi, (a doctor at Cork University Hospital), for their unwavering support and to other family and friends who have been terrific also."

I greatly appreciate and commend the excellent medical care I have received from doctors, nurses and ancillary staff. The staff at St. Damien's ward in Beaumont Hospital were superb in my care around the time of my transplant. Special thanks also to the nurses in the PD dialysis unit in Merlin Park in Galway. Also, the care I have been receiving in the post-transplant clinics in University Hospital Galway and Merlin Park has been outstanding. I would also like to acknowledge the support we received from the IKA, particularly its staff in the Renal Support Centre, who provided us with a haven of comfort away from home. Most of all I would like to thank the family of my donor, whom I will never know, who has given me a second chance at life."

Eleanor and I

would like to convey our gratitude to the people of New Quay and in the surrounding area who have been so supportive of us both since we came to live in Clare five years ago



SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE IKA

**Yes, I would like to make a regular donation by
STANDING ORDER.**

**Yes, I would like to make a regular donation by
STANDING ORDER.**

STANDING ORDER REQUEST FORM

To: The Manager of

(Your bank's name and address)

I/We hereby authorise you to set up a Standing Order on my/our account as specified below:

Signed:-

Date: _____

Address:

PLEASE CHARGE TO MY / OUR ACCOUNT:

Name of Account: _____

(These can be found, printed on your bank statement)

Monthly

Bank Identifier Code - BIC:

(These can be found, printed on your bank statement)

Monthly Quarterly Yearly DONATION of Amount €

(Please tick as appropriate)

to start on Date: _____ / _____ / _____

AND CREDIT TO THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNT:

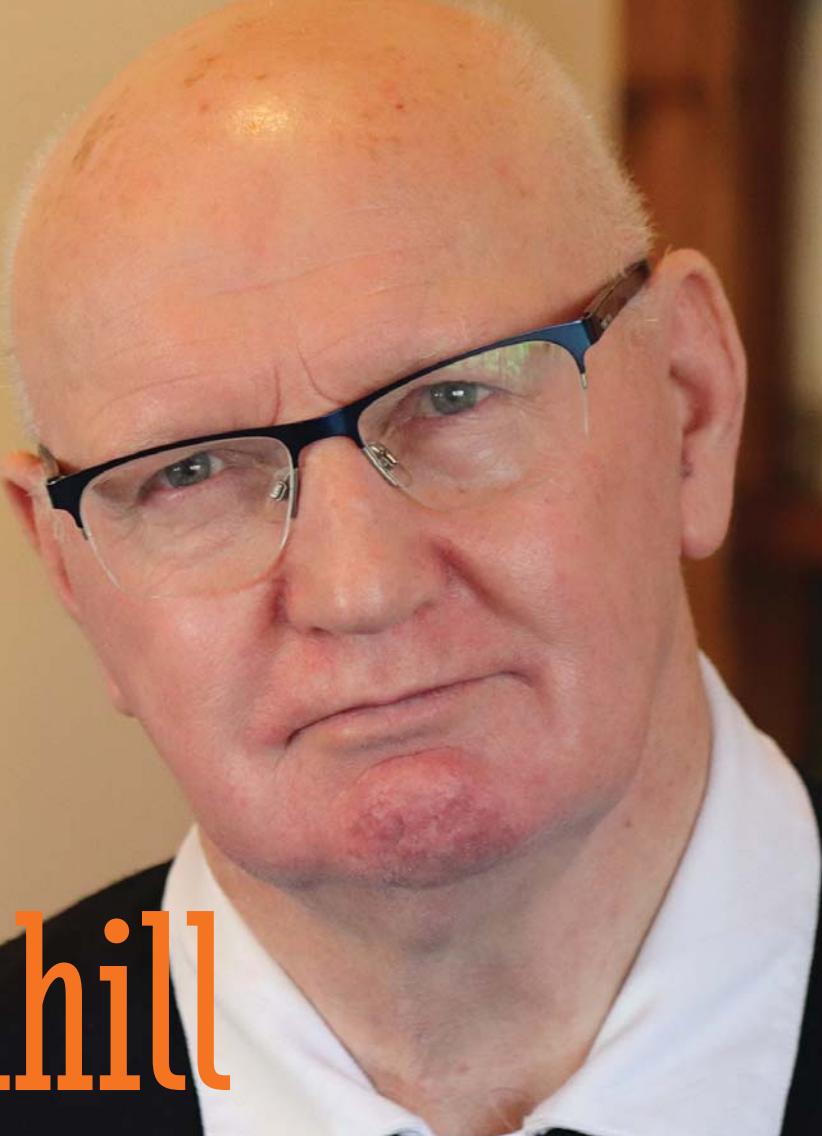
Name of account: **IRISH KIDNEY ASSOCIATION** at Bank of Ireland, College Green, Dublin 2.

IBAN NO.: IE06 BOFI 9000 1717 1934 35

As long as you are a PAYE or self-employed tax payer, when you donate €250 or more in a year (€21 or more per month), the Revenue Commissioners will give the Irish Kidney Association CLG an extra rebate of 45%. For example, if you gave €250 in one year, the IKA would gain an extra €112, at no extra cost to you.

**Please post to: THE IRISH KIDNEY ASSOCIATION CLG, DONOR HOUSE, BLOCK 43A, PARKWEST, FREEPOST, DUBLIN, D12 P5V6
(PLEASE DO NOT POST TO YOUR BANK)**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY



THE OTHER Martin Cahill

Six years ago, my kidneys developed a disease called glomerulonephritis. I was on medication to control it for about 3 years before they finally failed at Christmas 2014. I immediately went on dialysis at the Fresenius Medical Care Clinic at Northern Cross, Dublin.

As you can imagine kidney failure and going on dialysis was a traumatic experience for me. I wouldn't be the bravest of patients – a visit to the dentist has always been enough to send me into a faint! However, the staff at the clinic were brilliant and eased me into the procedure with great care and understanding. I spent the next two and a half years on dialysis and over that time developed a warm and friendly relationship with the staff and my fellow-patients. The atmosphere at the clinic was one of professionalism, kindness and support. Professor Conlon was my Consultant from day one and I would like to thank him.

In June last year, I got the 'miracle call' from the transplant coordinator, to come to Beaumont. Believe it or

not, I was playing golf and didn't hear my mobile ring. Thankfully my wife was contacted and she rushed to Clontarf Golf Club and came flying down the 16th fairway on a buggy. After I got my 'ears boxed' I went straight to Beaumont. That afternoon the surgeon, Ms Dilly Little, performed the transplant. It was a complete and immediate success.

The care I received over the following week from Ms Little, her team and the nursing staff at St. Damien's Ward was incredible. I will be grateful to them forever.

Since my transplant, I have gone from strength-to-strength. My overall health has improved enormously. I can more or less eat what I like, I can travel, my energy level is back to normal and I'm playing golf again (as badly as ever)!

After my transplant when I was well enough I went back to the Fresenius Medical Care Clinic to thank everybody for the care I received while on dialysis. There was great joy at my news, as there always is when a patient gets a transplant – it gives everybody a lift. Since my own

transplant several more patients from the Clinic have received transplants, which is wonderful.

I have been a member of the Irish Kidney Association for some years and after my transplant I got more involved with my local branch, which is Dublin North. This has proved hugely beneficial for me. The branch is very active and meets regularly. It often invites expert guest speakers to the meetings. Mike Kelly was a recent guest speaker and gave a very informative talk. The branch organises a variety of functions throughout the year. A particularly memorable one last year was a super concert featuring Red Hurley which was a sell-out and raised €7,000 for the IKA. I would encourage all dialysis patients and those fortunate enough to have received a transplant to get involved in their local branch. They will undoubtedly get great support.

Last October, I attended the IKA's Annual Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving. As a transplant recipient it was a great privilege to join other transplant recipients in honouring and expressing our gratitude to the huge

number of donor families in attendance. Their generosity and compassion in making the decision to give the 'gift of life' to another person at a time of their own terrible loss and grief is truly heroic and inspirational. My sister Concepta and her husband Michael attended the Service with me and we found it absolutely beautiful and uplifting. It was especially poignant for me when we placed our candles on the altar in memory of my own anonymous donor.

I would like to finish with this quotation from the United Network for Organ Sharing which was published in the IKA Autumn 2016 SUPPORT.

"Without the organ donor there is no story, no hope, no transplant.
But when there is an organ donor, life springs from death, sorrow turns to hope and a terrible loss becomes a gift."



SOCIAL MEDIA & COMMUNICATION

Over Christmas and into the New Year our social media was very active, particularly our Twitter account. There were a number of strong stories going around and we played our part in building on their momentum. As a direct consequence of the increased activity on social media we had a significant boost in the number of organ donor card requests coming through our website and our freetext number.

Arising out of the increased social media traffic and consequent increased demand for organ donor cards, an online discussion about the need to upgrade our Digital Organ donor Card app gathered momentum. Thanks to Orla Tinsley for putting out a request for help, Showoff, a company based in Rathnew, stepped forward and offered to design a new app for us at 50% of the market cost. It has been pleasing to see the interest in this technology and it has led to increased discussion about the need for a YES/NO Organ Donor registry into which the app could feed people's wishes.

We will once again be pushing a strong social media campaign in the build up to and during Organ Donor Awareness Week. The support of the 26000+ followers on the page will be important to ensuring that our messages reach far and wide. Please use the hashtag #OrganDonationWorks on all platforms so that we can see the extent of our reach.

Towards the end of last year we were fortunate to be selected by Graphara Designs in Clare to have a full website overhaul done free of charge. Thanks to Farah Burma, we are delighted that our new, and greatly improved, website is now up and running and it offers a great portal into our services and activities.

KIRBY EMPLOYEES RAISE OVER €5,000



Employees from Kirby's Galway office took part in a local fundraising event in and in doing so, managed to raise over €5,000 for charity.

37 employees donned Santa suits and ran a 5K route around Galway city as part of the annual Santa Dash. They raised, with support from the company, over €5,000 for charity. Over €4,000 was donated to the IKA while the remaining €1,000 was donated to the Galway Simon Community.

Mikey Ryan, Operations Manager at Kirby, pictured above with Lenny Ryan and Deborah Cervi from IKA Head Office, organised Kirby's participation in the event and presented the cheque to the IKA on behalf of the company. Mark Murphy, CEO, IKA, thanked the employees for their goodwill and generosity. The money raised from the Santa Dash will go towards supporting the vital work of the IKA and the Galway Simon Community. Well done to everyone involved!

TAX RELIEF ON HEALTH EXPENSES INCURRED BY KIDNEY PATIENTS

All patients that pay tax are encouraged to complete a Revenue form Med 1 health expenses claim for relief which will relieve the financial burden somewhat at the standard rate of tax. The form can be downloaded from the revenue website, or we can do that for you if you would prefer.

If you are paying €144 per month for your medications for the whole year you will be able to claim €1,728.00 on your Med 1 form at 20% standard rate you will be due a €345.60 tax refund. You can make a claim for the previous 3 years also.

If, as an individual patient you are not working and do not pay tax, but your spouse is working and paying tax they can make the Med 1 claim for a refund on their taxes.

MARK MURPHY

A person on haemodialysis in a hospital or clinic, who does not avail of a HSE means of transport and who pays tax may make a claim for their travel expenses.

Hospital dialysis patients

(where the patient attends hospital for treatment).

Relief in respect of expenditure incurred travelling to and from hospital (unlimited journeys for all years) may be allowed at the following rates:-

MILEAGE/KILOMETRIC RATES

2014	€0.27 per mile or €01.7 per km
2015	€0.27 per mile or €01.7 per km
2016	€0.27 per mile or €01.7 per km
2017	€0.29 per mile or €01.8 per km

Home dialysis patients (where the patient uses an APD or haemodialysis machine at home).

Relief may be allowed in respect of expenditure up to the following amounts:-

RELIEFS ALLOWED

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Electricity	€2100	€1905	€1835	€1790
Laundry & protective clothing	€1930	€1925	€1925	€1935
Telephone	€305	€305	€305	€305
Travelling	€0.27 per mile or €0.17 per km	€0.27 per mile or €0.17 per km	€0.27 per mile or €0.17 per km	€0.29 per mile or €0.18 per km

Chronic Ambulatory Peritoneal Dialysis (CAPD) patients

(where the patient has treatment at home without the use of a APD machine)

Relief may be allowed in respect of expenditure incurred up to the following amounts:-

RELIEFS ALLOWED

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Electricity	€1660	€1505	€1505	€1415
Telephone	€305	€305	€305	€305
Travelling	€0.27 per mile or €0.17 per km	€0.27 per mile or €0.17 per km	€0.27 per mile or €0.17 per km	€0.29 per mile or €0.18 per km

OPPORTUNITIES and DEVELOPMENTS in Transplant and Dialysis Sports

British Transplant Games

This year's British Transplant Games will take place in Birmingham from August 2nd-5th. We have been invited to enter an Adults' team and a Children's team.

There is a great variety of sports on offer ranging from fishing and snooker to swimming, cycling and athletics and many more besides. With events offered from the under 5's to the over 70's there is a place for everyone!

You can find out more about the event at: www.britishtransplantgames.co.uk. If you are interested in finding out more about being a part of the teams travelling from Ireland please contact Colin White in Donor House (colin@ika.ie).



TRANSPLANTOUX: Exercise is Medicine

I recently had the privilege of attending a Symposium in Leuven, Belgium on the value of sport and exercise post-transplant. It was hosted by the Belgian organisation Transplantoux and was attended by transplant physicians, physiotherapists and other specialist in the area as well as patient bodies such as the European Transplant & Dialysis Sports Federation and the World Transplant Games Federation.

I enjoyed co-chairing one of the session and came away with the firm belief that the transplant medical community is realising the potential of exercise as medicine and I look forward to encouraging our own transplant community to engage with programmes such as the World Transplant Games Fit For Life! Programme as well as the traditional sports events.



Through the efforts of Deirdre Faul, one of our swimmers in **Transplant Team Ireland, Swim Ireland** are now working with us to help develop swimmers of all abilities. They are keen to open up swimming to new people as well as those who are experienced. It is a great activity for giving a non load-bearing work-out at a level that works for each individual.

We are very appreciative of the commitment being made by Swim Ireland and you are encouraged to avail of the opportunity. I am delighted that we had a number of transplant recipients taking on the Swim Ireland Swim for a Mile Challenge around the country. 1600m in a swimming pool is a great challenge for anyone. Our swimmers are offering a great example to others as to what is possible post-transplant.

There will be a coach at our next sports session in the ALSAA Sports Complex next to Dublin airport on **Sunday April 15th**. Contact colin@ika.ie to register.

RAISING AWARENESS THROUGH SPORT

There has been some great awareness of the value of organ donation for transplantation raised through sport in recent months with members of our sports team gaining recognition in Cork and Tipperary and Cuala GAA Club embracing the message too. We have some transplant recipients participating in mainstream Masters Sports in swimming and athletics. Every involvement is raising awareness of the 'Gift of Life'.

Beaumont hospital recently launched their **Sli na Slainte** programme and members of our sports team were on hand to support the launch and again showcase what can be achieved. The hospital has worked out routes both indoors, around the hospital, and outdoors around the campus.



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SLIGO IKA BRANCH

The Branch held a Coffee morning in Bank of Ireland, Stephen Street, on Friday December 15th which was very well supported and particular thanks to Francis Dowd, Niall Canning, Fran Kearins, Padraig 'Lotch' Lynch and all the fantastic staff at the bank. €311 was raised.

The Christmas draw took place in the Sligo Southern Hotel, on Friday December 15th. €4,100 was raised.

The draw was made by Emily McKeon, Duty Manager and the prizes won were as follows:

- 1st: 4 Flights from Knock to Lanzarote:
Stacey Conway, Sligo
- 2nd: €200 Hamper - Kathleen Raleigh
- 3rd: €100 Nicholson's Pharmacy Hamper
Geraldine McQuinn, Sligo
- 4th: 1 Night B&B Radisson Hotel Ballincar
Helen Watters, Sligo
- 5th: Meal for 2 Glasshouse Hotel Sligo
Robert Winn, Galway
- 6th: €60 Fabricca Restaurant Voucher
Cora Higgins, Sligo
- 7th: €50 4 Lanterns Voucher
Shane Thornton, Sligo
- 8th: Quayside Shopping Centre Vouchers & Cosmetics - Claire Walsh, Sligo

Our branch and the Sligo branch of Diabetes Ireland held a very successful meeting in the Sligo Park Hotel on January 25th.

The meeting was opened by Elizabeth Fahy who spoke of the life-changing kidney transplant for her older sister and its impact on her and the family in such a wonderful way. The importance of organ donors and the need for people to learn as much as possible so as to be able to make informed decisions was discussed.

SLIGO

By NOEL KENNEDY



Hughie Costello, IKA Sligo with Francis Dowd, Fran Kearins and Niall Canning, at the Coffee morning in Bank of Ireland, Stephen Street, Sligo.



Sligo Branch IKA members and friends at Sligo Southern Hotel with Emily McKeon, Hotel Duty Manager.



Michael McHugh, Sligo Branch received a cheque from The Cake Lady, Sarah Healy for €721 - The Branch wish to thank Sarah and everyone involved who once again supported Association



The Sligo branch Committee and speakers at the joint Diabetes Care evening.



Mary Fahy and daughter Elizabeth



Donal Gilroy, Diabetes Ireland Sligo branch



Odella, Geraldine McHugh, Mike Kelly, Brian McHugh

When Elizabeth concluded her speech, she received a rapturous and well-deserved round of applause from all present.

The three main speakers were Professor Cathy McHugh (Diabetologist), Dr James Lineen (Nephrologist), SUH and Mike Kelly Coordinator of Counselling Services, IKA.

The large attendance had a most informative night that intensively covered information on renal and diabetes studies and treatments. Mike Kelly's presentation was excellent and the questions and answers at the end of the evening were excellent. Abbott Ireland were also present and Abina O'Flynn, Territory Manager, Abbott Diabetes Care was present to demonstrate the latest in testers developed by Abbotts.

Both Association's, with the help and support of SUH Management staff, will be running at least one more similar type meeting this year.

At our February monthly meeting we were busy discussing ideas and events for Organ Donor Awareness Week and we also elected Geraldine McHugh as Interim Branch Secretary.

We announced that Ray MacSharry will be our Ambassador for Organ Donor Awareness Week.

Emer Melvin, Clinical Nurse Manager and Staff Nurse Geraldine Slowly, from the Renal Unit SUH, attended the meeting. The chairman, Michael McHugh, welcomed both guests and a general and most informative meeting was held that embraced all aspects of renal care and actions for follow-up.

Geraldine donated over €682 to the Branch, proceeds from a St Brigid's Day Sale of Crosses organised by the transition years students in Tubbercurry. She is also organising a

Cookery Night in the Radisson Hotel, Rosses Point, Sligo on Thursday April 5th. Internationally renowned Executive Chef Joe Shannon will be taking charge of the night - admission is free and all are welcome.



Emer Melvin and Joan Melly



At the Sligo branch February meeting were: standing (l-r): Ita McMorrow, David Breen, Sean Fowley, Geraldine McHugh, Charmaine Button, Ronnie Melly and Hughie Costello. Seated (l-r): Marie Fowley, Emer Melvin, Geraldine Slowey, Michael McHugh



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STORM EMMA

We have just come through storm Emma and I hope all of you have survived intact. I would like to thank the renal team in CUH for the professional manner in which they dealt with the crisis. Dialysis was conducted with military precision, many nurses slept on floors and chairs from Wednesday to Sunday to ensure all patients received treatment – a big ‘thank you’ also to the army and the Civil Defence for getting the patients in and out of the hospital safely.

WHATAPP

In the last edition of *SUPPORT* we advised our readers that we had launched a WhatsApp group to communicate faster and better with all our members. We have over 250



Teresa O'Neill receives hamper from Noreen O'Halloran



Pat O'Sullivan presents Nurse Eileen Phelan with a hamper

mobile numbers for members but we are not sure if all of these are correct and current. If you receive a request to join our group it will be headed IKA, please accept and keep in touch with others in the branch and up-to-date with current events. If you have changed numbers or your address recently please email our secretary at secretarycork.ika@gmail.com with your up-to-date details. If you are not receiving any communication from the branch, letters, advice on events or meetings etc. it might mean you inadvertently ticked the application at the start to say you did not want to receive branch material. To update this, again contact our secretary, either by phone or by email.

The IKA is in the process of updating its website. *SUPPORT* magazine is available to view online at this site so if you would like to save on the environment and the cost of postage you can advise us that you no longer want to receive the hardcopy in the post.

ORGAN DONOR AWARENESS WEEK LAUNCH

Our launch this year will take place in the Rochestown Park Hotel at 6.30pm on March 29th.

Our Guests speakers on the night will be Lord Mayor of Cork City, Cllr. Tony Fitzgerald, Ardmore, Chorai; Tomás O'Leary, former Munster and Ireland Rugby International and Professor Liam Plant.

We are looking forward to seeing you all there and again if anybody can help during Organ Donor Awareness Week please contact us. Refreshments will be served on the night.

DIALYSIS WARD

For some time now the televisions in the dialysis ward have been given serious trouble. This has caused discomfort for a lot of the patients in not being able to watch their favourite channels. We are in the process, along with the HSE, in replacing all of the televisions and hopefully this will be done sooner rather than later. It will also involve

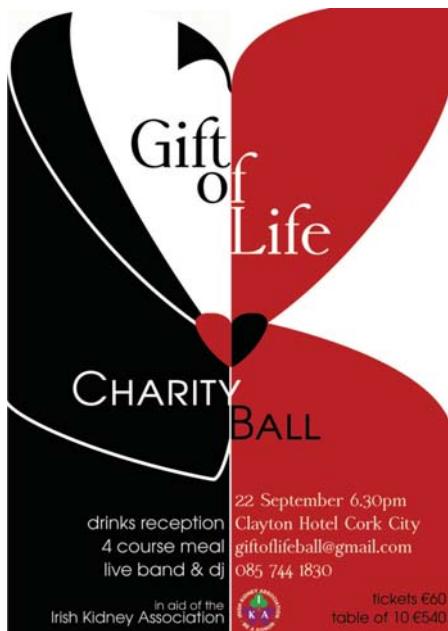


They have arrived!!

replacing the satellite dish and a new feeder box to distribute the channels. This is going to come at a considerable expense so much fundraising will need to be done to cover the costs.

GIFT OF LIFE BALL

Sally Nagle is celebrating her 10 year transplant anniversary this year and to mark the occasion Sally has organised a Gift of Life Ball in the Clarion Hotel in Cork. At the time of writing tickets were selling fast - see poster below for further details. This is a Black Tie event and all proceeds raised will go to the IKA.



PRESENTATIONS

BCD Engineering recently held an employee raffle. The IKA were the nominated charity again this year. One of their own, Risteard MacGiolla Bhui, was recently transplanted. BCD Engineering generously match whatever is raised in the raffle and we would like to thank them for their generosity and for again thinking of the IKA.

Karen O'Sullivan, Bantry, raised over €800, proceeds from the mini marathon. Thank you Karen.



Frank Cronin at CUH on World Kidney Day



BCD Engineering presentation

Over 30 hampers and 10 gift vouchers were presented to patients again this year. Once again we had music in the dialysis ward to mark the presentations. It was a very busy day and we would like to thank Margaret, Joanne and their team for allowing us to keep our Christmas tradition.

GOLF CLASSIC

We will hold our annual Golf Classic again this year. The date is June 8th in Mitchelstown Golf Club. Teams of three will be €150 which will include a meal after your round. Our Golf Classic is getting stronger and stronger every year and we really



Renal team at Cork University Hospital on World Kidney Day



Marleise and Ber at CUH on World Kidney Day



Brid and Ann at CUH on World Kidney Day



Students from UCC

CORK CONTD.

AROUND THE
BRANCHES

could not do it without the help of our sponsors and supporters who come and play.

If you are interested in entering a team, or sponsoring a tee box, you can contact us at infoikacork@gmail.com

UCC TALKS

Once again we were asked to give talks to the medical students of UCC. Margaret Leahy, Marleise Walsh,

Michael Kiely, John Hurley, Hugh Nolan and Sally Nagle all gave up their free time to come and tell their stories.

Thank you all for giving your time.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Organ Donor Awareness Week Launch

March 29th, Rochestown Park Hotel 6.30pm

Organ Donor Awareness Week,

March 31st to April 7th.

AGM

April 10th,
8pm Rochestown Park hotel

Support Meeting, 5th May, 8pm

Rochestown Park Hotel.

Support Meeting, 5th June, 8pm

Rochestown Park Hotel.

IRISH KIDNEY ASSOCIATION GOLF Classic

Without the organ donor,
there is no hope, no transplant.
But when there is an organ donor,
life springs from death, sorrow turns to hope,
and a terrible loss becomes a gift



John, Mary and Mike at UCC



Pat and Hugh with some of the students from UCC



We particularly appeal to our members, your families and friends to please give generously of your time to assist the branch promote the organ donor card during Organ Donor Awareness Week. Our campaign will highlight, once again, the need for organ donation as we think of all those who are awaiting the lifesaving gift of an organ transplant.

Please give an hour or two to support those that are ill by giving a call to Mary Abbott 085-1245874 or Peggy 087-9392148 - choose a location convenient to you – Ennis, Kilrush, Kilkee, Shannon, Tulla or Killaloe.

Your assistance will be greatly appreciated as proceeds from the sale of our 'forget-me-not' emblem go towards the IKA's many projects in support of renal patients.

The Clare Branch West Clare Walk will take place in Kilrush on the May Bank Holiday Sunday 6th May at 3pm. Taking the same route as last year,

CLARE

By PEGGY EUSTACE



Paddy & Ann Bradley, Gerry Moran, Clare branch Treasurer and Vincent O'Halloran, Clare branch Chairman

commencing at the Square in Kilrush, heading out on the N67 along the Wild Atlantic Way towards Aylevaroo and return to Kilrush via Cappagh on the edge of the broad Atlantic. This route has proved very popular with the walkers who come from afar to participate and enjoy the splendid scenery of the Shannon estuary.

The committee, under the Chairmanship of Vincent O'Halloran, look forward to you joining them for the event.

Sponsorship cards will be available shortly from Vincent O'Halloran on 086-0854834, Geraldine Grace on 087-9716814, Carmel McCormack

086-1500657 or Peggy Eustace on 087-9392148.

A reception will be held in Teach Ceoil, Kilrush following the walk.

A cheque for €11,355 proceeds of the 2017 Walk has gone to the IKA's Renal Support Centre. Since it opened the Centre has proved invaluable to all who require accommodation.

The branch extends deepest sympathy to the husband and family, brothers and sisters of Mary Griffin, late of Ennis Road, Ruan and to John Mason on the recent death of his mother.

May they rest in peace.



Vincent O'Halloran and Peggy Eustace Clare branch Chairperson.



Maureen Organ and Geraldine Grace

• AROUND THE BRANCHES •

Hello to all from the Donegal Branch. It was great to see you all again at our Branch meetings after our long break.

All monies are now in for the Christmas cards, thanks to those who purchased.

By now you have all been notified about our next Branch meeting and our Organ Donor Awareness Week and Church Gate collections. We are asking anyone that has an hour to spare to help with these collections, in your local area, to contact me.

Rosaleen Harte, wife of the late Paddy Harte, TD, who passed away recently, donated €600, monies donated in lieu of flowers to the Donegal Branch of the IKA. We are very grateful and on behalf of the Donegal branch our condolences to the Harte family.

Happy birthday to our fantastic volunteer, Gortahork man Michael Kavanagh, who celebrated his 75th birthday recently. Michael donated his birthday monies of €530 to our branch. Michael also organised a Whist card games with Eithnis Gallagher and Martha Gallagher and between them raised the fantastic



George Bates and Rosaleen Harte

DONEGAL

By SIOBHÁN BATES



The Dillon siblings...James, Kevin, Rosaleen, Christopher, Paul, Ronan and Karl with their dad Jimmy at the Renal Dialysis Unit in Letterkenny University Hospital, presenting a cheque to Siobhán and George Bates, Donegal IKA branch. Also included are Edel Clinton, Caroline Diver, Debbie, Dr Anne Marie Moran, Claire Harkin, Dr Orla Dunne, Marie Pascaul, Shine Matthews and Anna Mae Paulose. Photo: Donna El Assaad.



sum of €1000, to go towards the much-needed funding for our dialysis patients during their dialysis visits.

We were invited to the Dialysis Unit for the photoshoot of the Dillon (Supermarket) family from Letterkenny. All 7 (out of 10 siblings) ran the Dublin Marathon and raised the fantastic sum of €14,100 for the Donegal Branch, to provide comforts for the patients in the Dialysis Unit. Their Father Jimmy is a renal patient at Letterkenny Renal Unit. The day also coincided with Jimmys 90th birthday and from us all Jimmy - a very happy birthday.

We wish all the branches good luck with Organ Donor Awareness Week

and we hope that the sun shines on all our volunteers. Also best wishes to our Church Gate collectors. 'Thank you' all.

Hi to all the staff in the Renal support Centre in Beaumont who continue, on a daily basis, to accommodate our renal patients and their families for their Dublin clinics.

Also 'thank you' to all our hard working nurses, doctors and staff of the units and hospitals.

Congratulations to those recently transplanted.

Our condolences to those who have endured a bereavement recently. May their gentle souls rest in peace.

Slán agus Beannacht.

AROUND THE BRANCHES

Here in Tipperary we are getting ready for Organ Donor Awareness Week and we take this opportunity to thank all our volunteers, in advance, for their help.

We had many awards for athletes who represented Ireland at the World Transplant Games and British Transplant Games. We had a great night in Clonmel for the Annerville Awards. The athletes who were awarded were Deirdre and Ned Crowe, for their participation in the British Transplant Games.

The Games are a great event to show how organ donation works. Deirdre and Ned were the first wife to husband transplant in Ireland. Sheila Gregan and Orla Hogan Ryan were awarded for their participation in the World Transplant Games in Malaga (Sheila won bronze in the Virtual Triathlon).

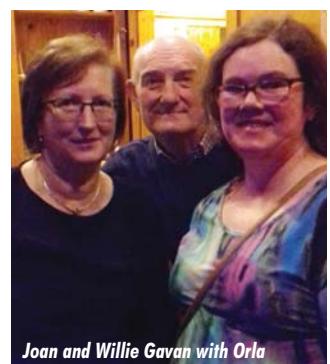
It is great to be honoured at a night like this, where all kinds of sport in Tipperary are being awarded. It helps

TIPPERARY

By ORLA RYAN



Deirdre and Ned Crowe, Orla Hogan Ryan and Sheila Gregan



Joan and Willie Gavan with Orla

us get the message out to the public that organ donation gives the gift of a new life.

We held a fundraiser in Upperchurch, Tipperary on Saturday January 27th. It was organised by Teresa Hyland who is a dialysis nurse in

Limerick. It was a lovely night with both local musicians and also musicians from France, playing their different instruments. Teresa had a CD which was sold on the night. Thank you Teresa - it was a great event and raised it over €2000.

OFFALY

By KEVIN GALVIN

Greetings from the Offaly Branch and we hope you have all come safely through Storm Emma. This is a big year for the Branch and all its supporters as we celebrate our 30th Anniversary on Sunday, June 10th.

CONDOLENCES

On behalf of the Branch we would like to extend our sincere sympathy to the family of our colleague Jenny Finlay, Clara. To her sons Bernard, John and Francis and her daughters Vivienne, Tanya, Kim and Elizabeth. Ar dheis Dé go raibh anam dilis.

GET WELL WISHES

Get well wishes are extended to our colleague David Cullinan and branch members Liam and Kathleen Swayne.



FUNDRAISING

A huge 'thank you' to South Offaly Ploughing, its Chairman Jonathon Murray and Sean Bracken for their generous donation to the branch following a fundraising Table Quiz in Dan & Mollies, Ballyboy on February 9th.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 31st March- 7th April** Organ Donor Awareness Week
- 19th April** Monthly Support Meeting
- 17th May** Monthly Support Meeting



The Limerick Branch enjoyed the annual Christmas lunch in the South Court Hotel Raheen, Limerick on December 3rd. As always it was very enjoyable. The food was delicious and the staff were so nice and helpful. The music from Jim Keane and the Night Owls provided a great atmosphere.

Thank you to Michael O'Donnell who donated €500 from Newcastle West Bridge Club to our branch of the IKA.



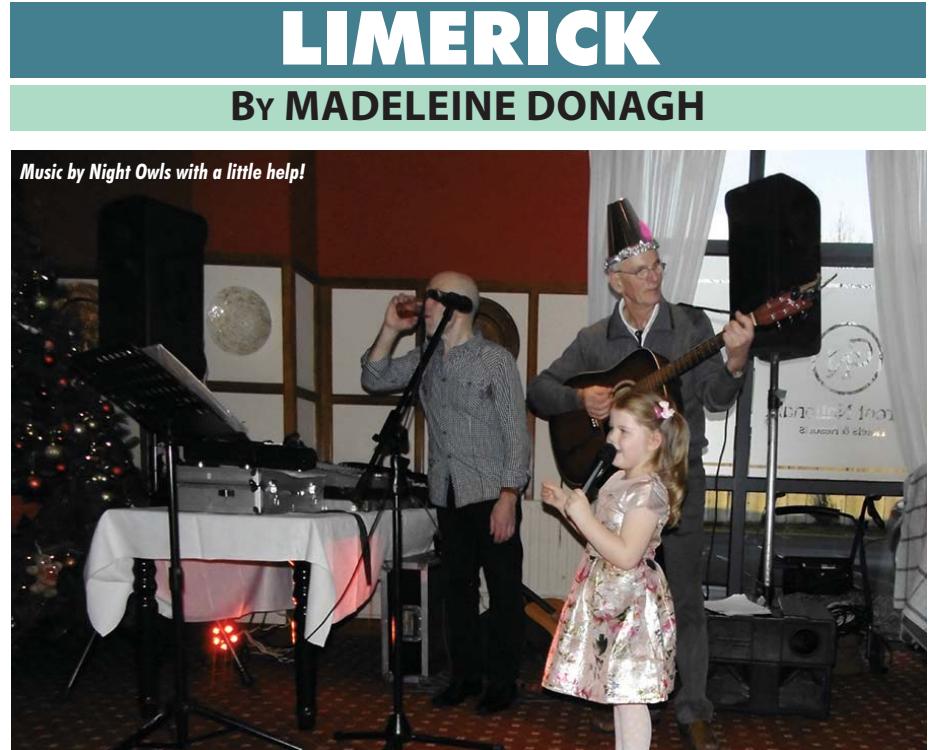
Aisling O'Reilly, Mary Spring, Sandra Dillon



Cormac Forde and Paraic Cannon



Judy Tobin, Rachel Tobin, Pat Collopy



Volunteers are needed to donate an hour or two of their time, if possible, to the Limerick Branch to help raise



Ger Kiely, Mary Kennedy, Carly Quinlivan

awareness during Organ Donor Awareness Week. Please contact Mary Downes 087-9612133.



Pat Hayes, Evelyn Byrnes and Mary O'Gorman



Peter and Mary Doherty



Mary Forde, Bridget and Aidan Forde



Ger Histon, Renee Crofton, Caroline Hogan and Pat Hayes

AROUND THE BRANCHES

The Roscommon Branch had a good turnout for their annual Christmas lunch, held in December in Hannons Hotel, Roscommon.

After the lunch David Beirne presented John Cormican, Treasurer, with the money raised from a halloween fundraiser which totalled €1110.

The Branch would also like to thank St. Faithleachs GAA Club for their donation of €50, the proceeds from a Charity football match held on St. Stephen's Day.

Sincere thanks to Tesco Roscommon for selecting our branch for the Blue Token Community Fund Project. The sum of €349.65 was presented to the branch recently.

Thanks also to Boyle GAA for their donation of €1000 from the 'Road to Croker' held in Boyle on Friday June 30th.

Members of the Branch will be out selling merchandise in the County for Organ Donor Awareness Week on Friday April 6th. If you would like to assist the Branch with this event, please contact us at 086-8969670

Wishing you all a very Happy Easter.



• AROUND THE BRANCHES •

TRACTOR AND CAR RUN

Shelburne AFC presented the Wexford Branch with a cheque for €500 proceeds from the Simon Dwyer Memorial Tractor and Car Run which was held in August.

5K NIGHT RUN

Wexford was a sea of yellow on Thursday 8th February as more than 1000 people shrugged off the elements and ran or walked the 5k course in aid of the Wexford Branch of the IKA and Wexford Marine Watch. We would like to thank Nicola Gregg, her family and all who turned out on the night to make the event such a success. The previous two annual runs has raised more than €30,000 for both charities

NEW DIALYSIS UNIT

Wexford's long-awaited dialysis unit opened on January 17th. It is a

WEXFORD

By MARIA DONLON



Shelbourne United AFC presenting cheque to Dora Kent and Martina Murphy, Wexford IKA branch.

beautiful state-of-the-art building. It is operating three days a week at the moment but is expected to be operating to full capacity, six days a week, providing dialysis for up to 60 patients by June. Up to now patients had to endure the exhausting journey to Waterford or Dublin three times a week to receive treatment. During the

recent bad weather some patients who normally receive their dialysis in Waterford were accommodated in Wexford.

SYMPATHY

We extend our deepest sympathy to the family of the late Tom Flood on their recent sad loss, R.I.P.

LAOIS By HAZEL CASE

The Cullahill and Durrow Flower & Gardening Club held a flower arrangement night in the Castle Arms Hotel, Durrow, during December. The event was well attended with mulled wine and mince pieces enjoyed by all.

Lawlor Florists donated the flowers and did the arrangements which were raffled on the night. The proceeds were divided between the IKA and the Cancer Society.

A big 'thank you' to all involved.





Welcome to the Spring edition of SUPPORT.

FUNDRAISING

A big 'thank you' to the proprietor of The Forge Bar, Portlaw and Paddy Long for organising the very successful Christmas Jumper Night and raising the sum of €820 for our branch. 'Thank you' to everyone who supported this event.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

We would like to thank everyone who bought our Christmas Cards. A special 'thank you' to the staff and patients at the Dialysis Unit, UHW for your support.

ORGAN DONOR AWARENESS WEEK

We continue to need your help and support to cover the local Supermarkets during this week. We are looking for as many volunteers as possible, especially for Saturday March 31st, for Aldi Ferrybank and Aldi Dunmore Road. Please contact Patsy 087-9647231 or Vera 086-8372442.



Members of Waterford branch at their Organ Donor Awareness launch. Photo: Joe Evans

ANNUAL DINNER

Our annual dinner will be held at Waterford Gold Club on Sunday April 22nd from 4.00pm to 9.00pm. Music by John O'Shea, WLRfm. All are welcome we would especially like to see as many patients and their families as possible. For more information contact Vera 086-8372442

STORM EMMA

We would like to acknowledge and thank the Civil Defence and Tramore Cliff & Mountain Rescue Association for helping our patients, during the recent bad weather, to get to the local hospital for their dialysis sessions. Your kindness is greatly appreciated.

We wish you all a very successful Organ Donor Awareness Week and we would like to take this opportunity to wish all our patients, members, families and friends a healthy and happy Easter.



Pictured at Bank of Ireland the Quay where a cheque for €410 was presented to the Waterford Branch, proceeds from a recent craft fair at the branch organised by It's A Wrap Gift & Art Studio are Sandra Kelly, Community branch Leader Waterford City, Mark Hodman, Welcome Advisor, Vera Frisby, IKA and Roseanne Magee, It's A wrap Gift & Art Studio.

Photo: Joe Evans



Fiona Tobin (Choir-mistress), Sinéad Lawlor (Treasurer, IKA Waterford) and Joe Moynihan (IKA, Waterford). The money raised was from the proceeds of refreshments served at the two concerts by the Déise Singers on December 9-10th, 2017 in St. Mary's Church of Ireland, Dungarvan. Sincere thanks to all the singers in the group and to those who prepared and served the teas and treats for their generosity.



Pictured are some of the volunteers who packed bags for customers at Christmas in Dunnes Stores, Dungarvan presenting a cheque for €2935.44 to IKA Waterford Branch Committee member Joe Moynihan (l-r): Aine O'Riordan (Dunnes Stores), Betty Daly, Joe Moynihan (Joe Moynihan Engineering), Réaltín Quinn, Carmel O'One, Joe Moynihan, Jack Murray, Conor Murray and Shane Dooley (Assistant Manager, Dunnes Stores).

• AROUND THE BRANCHES •

Hello to all members and greetings from the Galway Branch.

Our branch meetings are held every third Thursday of the Month in the Anno Santo Hotel in Threadneedle Road, Salthill at 7.30pm. We would love to see new faces and also those who have not been with us for some time. The more people we have at meetings greatly helps the division of tasks and, hopefully, will lead to ideas about activities and events that can be organised for the benefit of all members and associates of the IKA.

Members may know by now that Anna Maguire has retired from her post in Merlin Park Hospital. She was CNM Renal Nurse Counsellor and gave 20 years' service in Merlin Park. She is well-known to all dialysis patients and coordinated their clinics and medication needs over those years. Anna had planned to spend some time helping her family caring for her father but sadly he passed away shortly after her retirement. To her and her family we offer our deepest sympathy.



Peadar Ó hIci, Chris Curley, Stephen O'Sullivan and Eoin Madden, Chairperson IKA Galway branch.

Recently one of our regular attendees at our Remembrance Mass, Nevin Breen, passed away. Nevin received a liver transplant twenty two years ago. To his family we also offer our sympathy.

The Branch organised a lunch to honour Stephen O'Sullivan's retirement from membership of our committee. Stephen was a key member of the Branch and of the IKA having served on the National Council as Board Member, National Chairperson and Treasurer and was,

for many years, Chairperson of the Galway Branch. A presentation was made to Stephen at the lunch and all wished him many happy years 'skippering' his new leisure boat in Galway Bay.

Marie O'Brien, a staff member of St Anthony's and Claddagh Credit Union participated, along with some friends, in the Women's Mini Marathon and raised the magnificent sum of €750 which she donated to the branch, many thanks Marie.

A recent transplant patient, Carmel Nyland, organised a Dance in the Galway Rowing Club. It was a very enjoyable night attended by many of her family and friends. She raised €8,000 on the night and has allotted €2,000 of her takings towards the Renal Support Centre in the grounds of Beaumont Hospital. One notable feature of the occasion was the numerous sponsors who helped out on the night. Many thanks to Carmel and her helpers for such a great night of dance and music.

The snow and storm of early March caused the cancellation of a Table Quiz, organised by Patrick Eustace, in Galway and a Fashion Show, organised by Caroline Whelan, in Gort. They were postponed due to dangerous weather conditions. It is hoped to arrange a new date for both



Stephen with the group at presentation lunch.



Stephen with the group at presentation lunch.

events. So we ask all readers to keep a watch out for new dates.

The Annual Mass of Remembrance took place on March 11th in Knocknacarra Church. Refreshments were provided in the Anno Santo Hotel after the Mass.

The Galway Branch launched their Organ Donor Awareness Week in Menlo Park Hotel, Headford Road on 21st March. Dr Niamh Kiernan of Merlin Park and Pauline May, Nurse Coordinator for Saolta Group of Hospitals made presentations on the night. Niamh would be known to patients attending the Clinic at Merlin Park while Pauline, among other duties, trains and coordinates doctors and nurses in the best approach when speaking to families of terminally ill patients, on the possibility of organ donation.

Our City Collection will be held on Galway streets and some stores on Saturday March 31st. As usual we are appealing for volunteers to help out selling the 'forget me not' emblems. This event is the major fundraising activity of the Branch. The Western Hotel will be the Headquarters for distribution of collection boxes and donor cards.

The AGM will be held on April 15th and, again, we hope to have a good turn out.

Looking to the future we are planning to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the foundation of the IKA. If you have any good ideas or suitable events to suggest for the occasion we would love to hear from you.

Slán agus Beannacht.



Pictured at the presentation of the beanie hats to the Special Care Baby Unit, Cavan General Hospital, are (l-r): Susan McKenna, Renal CNS, Evelyn McAdam, CNM SCBU CGH, Nathalie Eakins, Staff Nurse and Breda Mulvanerty, CNM RDU

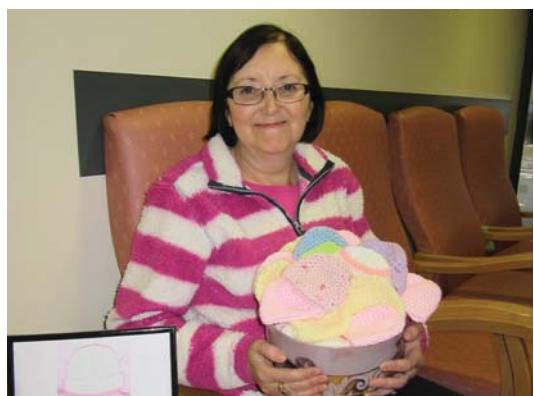
KNITTING BEANIES FOR BABIES

The patients and staff in Cavan General Hospital have had great pleasure in starting a knitting group in the dialysis unit at Cavan General Hospital. Susan McKenna, Renal CNS, was inspired by her own 93 year old mother-in-law Maura McKenna, who has, for the past couple of years, been crocheting hundreds of hats for the Special Care Baby unit at Cavan General Hospital. She has derived such pleasure helping out sick and premature babies in this small way.

It seemed possible that anyone on dialysis could also help out either while they were receiving treatment or at home. A poster was put up in the waiting room calling for anyone interested, to let a member of staff know.

Nathalie Eakins, Renal Dialysis Nurse, is a crochet teacher so she was key to supporting the knitters and crocheters in the dialysis unit, providing them with patterns and any wool or needles that they required.

The finished hats are very beautiful indeed and Cavan General Special Care Baby Unit were more than delighted to receive them and put them to good use.



Paula Cuddy with some of her lovely crochet hats



Nancy Reilly with her lovely knitted hats



DUBLIN NORTH

By PATRICIA MACKENZIE

Greetings to all our members and supporters.

It is with sincere regret that we acknowledge the passing of Maureen Lavin. Our deepest sympathy at this time to Fiona and all her family.

We also regret to announce the very recent passing of David Gilligan, husband of our member Caroline Gilligan. Our deepest sympathy to Caroline and her family and to David's family.

ORGAN DONOR AWARENESS WEEK

Organ Donor Awareness Week is almost upon us, and we look forward to a purposeful and profitable 8 days at our various locations. It is not too late to volunteer as there are still spaces available for collection.

Good luck to all our volunteers.

BRANCH AGM

Our Branch AGM will be held on Monday, April 16th in the Renal Support Centre, Beaumont Hospital commencing at 7.30pm sharp.



Members of the IKA Dublin branch are pictured with Red Hurley at the cheque presentation for €6000 to Patricia MacKenzie, proceeds of the Women's day held in Portmarnock last November.



RED HURLEY – HOW GREAT THOU ART

Spiritual Hits Concert

On Friday, April 13th, Red Hurley will once again perform in St Ann's Church, Portmarnock. His concert last year was a sell-out and there has been many requests for a return visit.

This concert will feature Red Hurley, the Eugene McCarthy musicians and singers together with St. Anne's Requiem Choir accompanied by Patricia Mackenzie.

The show starts at 8pm sharp.

Tickets are €25 and are available from Ann, Phone: 087-1352775 or Tess, Phone: 086-8576190.

All proceeds in aid of the IKA.

Dublin North Christmas Party





Greetings to all our members. We hope everyone is keeping well?

Kathleen McTeigue organised a 5k run in Drumkeeran, in aid of the Renal Support Centre in Beaumont Hospital. There was a great turn out for the event. Many members of Kathleen's family, young and not so young, along with friends and neighbours participated in the run. Kathleen's husband John is a transplant recipient and she organises this event annually.

A variety of awards were presented and there were plenty of refreshments at the finish. The event was a huge and enjoyable success with over €1000 raised.

Winners of Ireland's fittest family, the Beirne family, attended a photocall to officially launch Organ Donor Awareness Week 2018 for the Leitrim Branch of the IKA.



Ireland's fittest family - the Beirne family, Dearbháile, Keith, Jonathan and Michael are pictured with Leitrim branch officers: Frank Heslin, Treasurer; Annetha Kieran, Chairman and Cathriona Charles, Secretary/Board member.

LEITRIM 5K RUN



AROUND THE BRANCHES

JJ CONNOLLY MEMORIAL

Thank you to the Connolly family...Gerry, Jacinta and Christine, the organisers of the JJ Connolly Memorial and Family Fun Day in Tullow and the Pub Quiz which made a total this year of €5,120 for the IKA.

The Connolly family organise this event each year, in memory of their son and brother who died in 2014 and whose organs were donated for transplantation. JJ was a member of Parkville United FC, Tullow Rugby Club and participated in a lot of sports.

The turnout, from the Tullow area, at both events and the generosity to the IKA was testimony to JJ's popularity.

The Fun in the 'Fun Day' was provided by a 7-a-side 'ladies' football match! These 'ladies' can be seen in the photograph outside Dalton's Pub before the match.

The Connolly family would like to thank Mark Behan, Benny Shannon, Ray Shannon, Mick Flynn and the rest of Parkville United for their support in organising the Memorial Day.

Thanks also to Pauric (Beany) Murphy and Nicola Cosgrove who organised the Table Quiz in Dalton's Bar which was also a huge success.

ORGAN DONOR AWARENESS WEEK

Organ Donor Awareness Week takes place this year from March 31st to April 7th. Volunteers are needed in the Carlow area.

If any members, or their families would be available to help, could they ring Susan Tobin 087-6635910 or Pat May 087-6704784.



CARLOW

By PAT MAY



Christine, Gerry and Jacinta Connolly with Pat May and Susan Tobin, Carlow IKA branch.



The 'ladies' football team outside Dalton's Pub.



Presentation of cheque by the Connolly family and friends to Susan Tobin, Secretary, Carlow IKA branch.

For Donor Cards Freetext
DONOR to 50050



• AROUND THE BRANCHES •



Kildare's resurgence continues from last year when we banned the word meeting in favour of 'get together' where less business is done and more support is given.

Looking back, our Christmas celebration was a consummate success and to use the old adage, if you missed it, you missed out. Toughers Restaurant did us proud and at such an affordable rate that we were able to provide the entertainment, at no cost to members or guests. Indeed, thanks to the generosity of some individuals and local business, everyone who attended went home with at least two spot prizes.

It has become a tradition at our assemblies to incorporate an information element and while unusual for a party we felt it was best to continue this way. In the end we were both entertained and educated by Dr. Tobin, the lead national dermatologist. Our thanks to her and all of our speakers in 2017.

Our recent encounter with the 'Beast from the East' makes the severe weather warning back in February a distant memory but it nonetheless greatly reduced our turn-out in Celbridge. Those that did make it enjoyed Laura Austin, Transplant Coordinator from Beaumont, giving us the scoop on how to get on and successfully get off the transplant list.

Looking forward now...let the Kildare branch tell you a very short story.

The father of the bride rose to give one more toast and tilted his glass to the 'unknown donor' without whom no one would be there celebrating joyously, the bride having received a life-saving transplant years before. One of our members was so moved when she witnessed this that she proposed having a smaller local service

KILDARE

By PHILIP MEAGHER



in addition to the national Service of Remembrance to honour the 'unknown donor'.

Kildare were be proud to host members of all faiths, and none, on Saturday March 24th at 2pm in Johnstown Bridge RC church where Kildare, Meath and Offaly branches of the IKA will jointly launch their branch efforts for Organ Donor Awareness Week with an Ecumenical Service. Following which we will discuss sales and donor card distribution in the Hamlet Hotel over tea and coffee. All volunteers welcome. Please contact Branch Secretary, Liz O'Sullivan on 086-8263284 or Chairperson Philip Meagher 085-2501718.



Margaret Flanagan



Philip Meagher and Peter Kearney



**Find us on:
facebook.**

KERRY

By THERESA LOONEY



Hello from all in Kerry. Our big news at the moment is that the IKA has been nominated as one of the main charities for the 2018 Ring of Kerry Cycle on July 7th. The cycle attracts up to 10,000 cyclists and as well as raising vital funds it is a huge platform for promoting organ donor awareness. To this end, we hope to have a relay team of transplant patients taking part, so anybody around the country who think that they would like to be part of this team please contact us in the Kerry branch.

Last year Shane O'Connell from Castleisland, father of 3, who received a heart transplant three years ago, amazingly cycled the whole 180km. This was a truly inspirational and great achievement for Shane and his donor family.

Shane has again registered for this year's event and he would encourage any transplant patient, male or female, who has a certain amount of fitness to consider joining our team and enjoy Kerry hospitality and volunteerism at its best.

Following the huge success and demand for our holiday/respite home in Tralee plans are in place to purchase a second holiday/respite centre in Killarney. This project will be financed totally from funds raised at the Ring of Kerry Cycle and will benefit patients from all around the country. We are very excited about this project and will have more details on progress in the next edition of SUPPORT.

We thank Pat Sheehan and Niall Dennehy for their recent fundraisers amounting to €3900. Once again a big 'thank you' to Astellas for their ongoing support. They presented us with a cheque, which was the proceeds from a local school art competition and sale of calendars.

We thank Amanda Dowd and Elsie Moore in advance for organising a cake sale in Dingle on Easter Sunday in conjunction with Organ Donor Awareness Week. Amanda is mom to 4 year old Tómas who has just started home dialysis. We wish him every success with it until he is strong enough to be considered for a transplant (see story on page 14).

Plans around the county are being put in place



for this year's Organ Donor campaign. The more volunteers we have the more successful the event will be so anyone willing to give an hour or two please contact us.

To the family of the late Jimmy Walsh, who passed away recently after a long illness, we send our condolences. Jimmy travelled to Lourdes with us a couple of years ago and was a true gentleman. He also organised a team from his work place in The Kerry Group and from around north Kerry to cycle in the 2016 Ring of Kerry cycle. We will miss him, may he rest in peace.

Finally, on a positive note, we wish to congratulate one of our transplant patients Rhona Quirke and her husband Jack on the recent birth of their third child. Rhona had a successful transplant some years ago and has never looked back. She keeps down a job and manages her diabetes, amongst other things. A lady with a 'can-do' attitude and an inspiration to us all and her donor.



IRISH KIDNEY ASSOCIATION CLG

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM



BLOCK CAPITAL LETTERS PLEASE:

Mr. Mrs. Ms. FIRST NAME: _____

SURNAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

POSTCODE: TEL: _____ MOBILE: _____

EMAIL:

We record this information in line with the Constitution of the IKA. You must be 18 years of age to become a member of the Association.

Please indicate if any of the following apply to you:

PRE DIALYSIS, HAEMODIALYSIS, APD, CAPD or TRANSPLANTED YES NO

Do not wish to disclose

Do you wish to receive our quarterly 'SUPPORT' magazine by YES NO

Please tick 'No' if your household is already receiving it

Post? YES NO
Or Email? YES NO

Can we correspond with you for notices of Annual General Meeting YES NO
of the Association and Annual Director's Report by Email? YES NO

Would you like to receive information on activities from your local YES NO
IKA branch which entails us giving them the data from this form?

Would you like to receive information on the IKA Transplant & Dialysis YES NO
Sports and Fitness which is based in Head Office?

By signing this form you agree to become a member of the Association and you subscribe to the
Constitution of the Association (copy available on request or on the IKA website – www.ika.ie)

I subscribe to (sign up and accept) the Constitution of the Irish Kidney Association CLG (Company Limited by Guarantee).

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

Please return the completed signed form to the
Irish Kidney Association CLG, (Freepost), Donor House, Block 43A, Park West, D12, P5V6.
There is no subscription charge.



IKA DIRECTORY

Irish Kidney Association CLG, Donor House, Block 43a, Parkwest, D12 P5V6.

Tel: 01-6205306 | Email: info@ika.ie | www.ika.ie

Renal Support Centre, Beaumont Hospital, D09 Y5R3

Tel: 01-8373952 | Email: renalcentre@ika.ie



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New Ross,
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