

## MAYO MAN RAISES ALMOST €8,000 FOR IKA THROUGH CHARITY SKYDIVE IN MEMORY OF HIS LATE MOTHER

**(photos attached)**

A Mayo man has raised €7,750 in a charity skydive for the Irish Kidney Association (IKA) to honour his late mother who passed away six years ago. **Stephen Roche from Belcarra, a small village on the outskirts of Castlebar**, was delighted that the weather conditions finally proved favorable for him to carry out his skydive in Kilkenny last Saturday, 26th May. His skydive of 10,000 feet had to be deferred four times because of unsuitable weather since the first time it was scheduled to take place was during Organ Donor Awareness Week 2018 (31 March-7th April).

Stephen, the third eldest of a family of four, is an active young farmer who farms a small suckler herd along with his father Joe. Stephen is also an employee at **Aurivo's Agribusiness** animal feed mill in Ballaghaderreen, Co. Roscommon. Stephen had committed to 2018 being the year he would fundraise for the IKA and help to raise awareness about organ failure which contributed to his mother Marian's untimely death.

Stephen who completed the skydive said, "I am delighted to have raised almost €8,000 in the memory of my mother and to benefit a worthy cause, the Irish Kidney Association. I would like to thank everyone who supported me including family, friends, work colleagues and my local community".

In March this year and just before Organ Donor Awareness Week 2018 when Stephen had intended to undertake his skydive, Stephen said, "I'm looking forward to my first Skydive and I'm not afraid of the challenge. It's a wonderful way to honour my mother's memory while supporting a worthy charity, the Irish Kidney Association, and the work that it does in helping kidney patients as well as raising awareness about the plight of people with kidney failure and the importance of organ donation".

My mother was a very active person and the onset of her illness came on very quickly and we had no warning that she was suffering kidney failure. She suddenly became ill on St. Patrick's Day in 2012 she was brought to Mayo General Hospital. Some days later she was transferred to Galway and by this time she was gravely ill. Just over two weeks later my mother passed away at a young age of 57 years".

"My family's lives were turned upside down six years ago when my mother had an untimely death. It was too late when my mother presented in hospital suffering from kidney failure and despite the best efforts of medical and nursing staff and our numerous prayers she passed away on 4<sup>th</sup> April. She had retention of fluid caused by kidney failure which also led to other health complications which ultimately caused her body to shut down.

Unfortunately, my mother's silent illness took hold of her so quickly in the end that our family did not have the luxury of extended time with her. However, I hope that in the future and because of this awareness activity I am undertaking, that other families with a loved one suffering organ failure will have the opportunity to enjoy more precious time with them than we had.

Organ Donor Cards can also be obtained by phoning the Irish Kidney Association tel. [01 6205306](tel:016205306) or **Free text the word DONOR to 50050**. Visit website [www.ika.ie/get-a-donor-card](http://www.ika.ie/get-a-donor-card) or download the 'Digital Organ Donor card'.

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For further information contact:

Gwen O'Donoghue, Connect Communications, mob. [086 8241447](tel:0868241447) e. [gwenodonoghue1@gmail.com](mailto:gwenodonoghue1@gmail.com)

Stephen Roche. Tel. [086 065 0269](tel:0860650269) email [roches88@gmail.com](mailto:roches88@gmail.com)