

# The Review

We're your local charity for the care and prevention of chest, heart and stroke illnesses.

# Chest Heart & Stroke

## Study Aims To Unlock Mystery Of Baby Heart Disease



**Our award winning Baby Hearts Readers' Appeal undertaken in conjunction with our media partner Belfast Telegraph was extremely successful across a range of measures. These include recruiting new supporters of NICHs, securing much needed funds, raising awareness of congenital heart disease and highlighting the importance of investing in innovative research being undertaken here in Northern Ireland.**

NICHs is providing complete funding to the value of £172,000 for the three year study. The study is being led by Prof Helen Dolk and her colleagues at the University of Ulster. One advantage of carrying out the study in Northern Ireland is that all affected babies are treated at one medical centre – the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children.

The project aims to discover why some children are born with conditions like hole in the heart or Fallot's Tetralogy, a syndrome characterised by faults in the internal structure of the heart. The project will gather vital information by examining families who are affected by congenital heart disease and those who are not. Data on backgrounds, lifestyles and environments will be compared to isolate key risk factors. Once causes of congenital heart disease are identified, doctors may be able to recommend strategies to prevent it.

Little Joe Degnan from Larne is one of the hundreds of babies affected in Northern Ireland each year. In August 2013, he underwent surgery at just six days old and has had to have more surgery at 10 months old. Joe has a condition known as double inlet left ventricle. Affected babies suffer a

lack of oxygen in their blood and major organs. For his first operation Joe had to be flown by air ambulance to Birmingham and was in the operating theatre for five hours – five hours his mother, Kerri, describes as "agony." Joe on both occasions has had to fight a number of post-surgery complications.

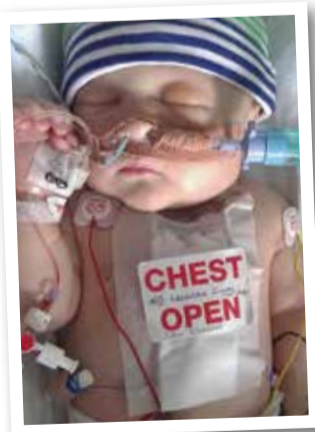
Kerri said: "We were living minute to minute, hour by hour. The ward was full of babies and other ill children and alarms would go off regularly. The whole experience was hard, completely life changing and very humbling. We are different people now.

"I'd do anything to help make sure that no other family has to go through what we've been through. That's why I'm supporting the Baby Hearts Appeal by telling our story and doing what I can to fundraise for the study."

Thanks to the generosity of the people of Northern Ireland, the campaign hit its target by Baby Joe's 1st birthday.

Andrew Dougal, Chief Executive of NI Chest Heart & Stroke, said: "This is local research with potentially worldwide impact and we're proud to support it. We thank

all those families – including baby Joe's parents Kerri and William – who have allowed us to tell their personal stories to draw attention to this vitally important campaign. And of course we would like to thank everyone who has helped us fund this research – without your support, it would not be possible."



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# WE'RE ON YOUR SIDE

## Chairman's Report



I congratulate those staff involved in lobbying both the Health Committee and the DHSSPS in regard to the Tobacco

Retailers Bill. There will now be much tighter controls on the sale of tobacco. This is an issue on which we have been campaigning for many years.

After the disappointingly large financial deficit in 2012-13, we have enjoyed an improved financial result in 2013-14. We are working on

improving our income from a range of sources, but are still affected by the continued economic downturn.

I want to thank my colleagues on the Governance Board and on the Council for their commitment over the past year. I am pleased to welcome Christine Donnelly as a member of the Governance Board. I would also like to congratulate Board member Ann Hayes on her well-deserved award of the MBE.

It is with a profound sense of sadness that I record the death of our former Chairman, Dr Roger Lowry, on 30th January 2014.

I also record with regret the passing of

our former Council Member, Sir Pat Armstrong CBE.

As always, I want to pay a special tribute to our many volunteers who give their time to raise funds and help us provide much-needed services. They are a vital part of everything we do.

Finally may I pay tribute to the Chief Executive, Senior Management Team and staff who have ensured once again that the activities of NICHHS have not been diminished as a result of the difficult financial circumstances caused by the economic downturn.

**Professor MPS Varma**  
Chairman

## Chief Executive's Report



Our care services for those affected by chest, heart and stroke illnesses continue to go from strength to strength. Health promotion is

playing a bigger role than ever. We have extended our work with the homeless, with schools and with employers to help people avoid illness before it starts.

Our Taking Control Self-Management courses, which help people manage their own long-term health conditions, have greatly increased in number in every part of Northern

Ireland. This evidence based programme makes a huge difference to people and gives them back some control over their own lives.

We are pleased that Health and Social Care in N.Ireland are putting in place a Northern Ireland wide service to identify families affected by the genetic condition Familial Hypercholesterolaemia (FH), which causes abnormally high cholesterol and early development of heart disease. NICHHS helped start this vital initiative with £35,000 of initial funding.

While the Northern Ireland economy remains fragile, with all the implications that has for charitable giving, our income has improved in

the year under review. One major bright spot was our Baby Hearts Appeal in association with the Belfast Telegraph, which has reached its target of £172,000 and is helping to fund groundbreaking research into congenital heart disease in children.

There was also a marked increase in legacy income. This valuable source of funding can vary from year to year.

We have embarked on a five-year programme to recruit new long-term supporters and we hope that this will ensure a regular and predictable flow of funds. This will help with forward planning of our services.

**Andrew P Dougal OBE**  
Chief Executive

## Obituary - Dr Roger Lowry



We pay tribute to the former Chairman of NICHHS and one of Northern Ireland's pioneers in the field of respiratory medicine, Dr Roger Lowry OBE, who has died aged 80.

Dr Lowry was Chairman of Northern Ireland Chest Heart & Stroke from 1980 until 2008, when he stepped down because of illness. Our Chief Executive, Andrew Dougal, said: "His contribution to the health and wellbeing of the people of

Northern Ireland was immeasurable. His vision and leadership ensured that NICHHS became a leading force in achieving change, with a consequent reduction in premature deaths.

It was a joy to work alongside him for 25 years."

The charity annually awards the Roger Lowry Research Medal to the best example of student research into chest, heart and stroke illnesses.

Dr Lowry was educated at Campbell College and Queen's University. He was Associate

Professor of Medicine at the University of Tennessee in 1976-77, before returning to Belfast as a consultant physician in respiratory medicine at the City Hospital, a post he held until his retirement in 1998. He was awarded the OBE in 2001 for his services to charity. He was a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in both England and Ireland.

Roger was a keen sportsman and excelled at tennis, squash, cricket and golf, playing off a single figure handicap.

He leaves his wife, Joan, and five children, Kevin, Michael, Peter, Alan and Julie and 11 grandchildren.

# NICHHS: A Year in Figures 2013/14

**Over 4,000 people with chest, heart and stroke illnesses and their families and carers were supported by NICHHS in 2013-14.**

NICHHS Stroke Family Support had 1,459 new referrals, which equates to over a third of the total annual number of strokes, and made 2,714 home visits.

NICHHS helped 654 people across Northern Ireland through its 22 Stroke Schemes and 7 Young Stroke Groups.

416 people benefited from NICHHS's 23 Respiratory Schemes.

There were 148 referrals to the Stroke "Moving On" - Post Rehabilitation Service, in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust.

197 people took part in 16 "Taking Control" Self Management Programmes.

We are currently funding 13 research projects in Queen's University Belfast and 4 in the University of Ulster - 6 cardiac, 2 stroke and 9 respiratory projects.

Our NICHHS Health Promotion Nurses visited 79 businesses, 195 community organisations and 13 schools to carry out health assessments or deliver talks.

We reached 3,500 pupils by delivering health talks to 12 primary, 8 secondary and 2 colleges, and through our Chester's Challenge Programme to 27 Primary schools.

We delivered our Health & Homeless Programme in 89 hostels benefiting 637 people.

## Struck Down By Stroke – At 30



**Tracey is a mother of one from Greencastle, Omagh. She suffered a stroke shortly after her 30th birthday in 2013.**

In an instant, her life changed. Tracey went from being very active and walking nearly every day to having to relearn to use her left leg.

Stroke affects the whole family. In the early days, her daughter Rachel was reluctant to leave her side. Tracey couldn't even do Rachel's hair, so she had to learn everything herself at the age of nine. It was also hard for Tracey's parents to accept their child had had a stroke. The family have been a huge support, even to the point where she had to ask them to allow her to start trying things for herself.

Tracey came into contact with NICHS through our Stroke Family Support service. Marie Kelly, Stroke Family Support Co-ordinator, visited Tracey at home and encouraged her to go along to the Taking Control Programme in October 2013.

Even though she was the youngest person on the programme Tracey enjoyed it and found it encouraging and useful. The fact that everyone was in a similar situation regardless of age or condition was important. Everyone had similar thoughts, worries, fears and problems.

She also valued the goals or action plans that are set each week – promising others that you will achieve something helps greatly with the motivation to do it.

An early goal for Tracey was to participate in the annual Christmas walk in her local community and she succeeded. Her next goal was to organise a fundraising event for NICHS and less than a year after her stroke she organised a St Patrick's weekend of musical entertainment, a sponsored walk and a coffee morning. In total, she raised £3,500.

Her next goal is to get back to the gym, with the help of NICHS.

Tracey's story (left) shows the difference that NICHS's Stroke Family Support can make to a stroke survivor and their family. Along with Eric from Coagh, Raymond from Belfast, Jacinta from Holywood and Christine and Alan from Dollingstown, Tracey has taken part in a campaign to raise awareness of the Stroke Family Support service across Northern Ireland.

Her story and Eric's story have appeared on billboards and bus shelter advertisements. The stories were also captured on video for NICHS's website and social media. All five stories are different but they show the same thing – that listening, understanding, advising and supporting can really make a difference.

If you want to know more about NICHS's Stroke Family Support watch the videos or download a leaflet, please go to [www.nichs.org.uk/strokefamilysupport](http://www.nichs.org.uk/strokefamilysupport).

## How We Helped Soccer Star To Tackle Illness



**Anyone can be affected by stroke. Jamsie Nicholl was the captain and former team mate of Pat Jennings and George Best in the**

**most successful Northern Ireland team ever.**

After retirement, Jamesie continued to be active but in the few weeks prior to his stroke, he felt tired and listless. Jamsie's wife Christine found him unconscious in his chair. He was admitted to Altnagelvin Stroke Unit. Although his speech quickly returned, he was left with severe right side weakness.

His initial recovery took 4 weeks and he was full of anger and frustration. Life had changed and he was no longer able to do things as before. After leaving hospital, he simply stayed in the house. No strangers were allowed to visit. He was embarrassed and this period was characterised by tears, depression and a short temper. "It was a difficult time for us as a family," says Christine.

"There were many tears. We put on a "front" for visitors and family. We tried to handle the changes to everyday living as best we could, to deal with his frustration, depression, loss of confidence and self esteem. It was a difficult time for us."

As part of his rehabilitation, Jamsie met Anne Marie Doherty, an occupational therapist with our Young Stroke Service. Jamsie found he had "hand to shoulder syndrome" which gave him severe pain, but rather than use potentially addictive steroids, he said he would rather cope with the pain. However, during the therapy recommended by Anne Marie, the pain disappeared overnight and has never returned.

Encouraged by his progress, Jamsie moved on through our Taking Control Self Management programme and became a member of our Brandywell Support group. He says: "I enjoyed it that much, and got so much out of it, that if it had started at 8 o'clock in the morning and ran into the evening I would have been there. It gave me the confidence I needed to get back into society."

Jamsie is now one of the leading support volunteers at the Brandywell Support Group. His story – and the stories of other stroke survivors – features in Stroke Odysseys, a musical production that filled Derry Playhouse for two nights in December 2013.

## Surviving Lung Disease

**Mark is 53 years old and was diagnosed with COPD in February 2011.**

He was medically retired from work in August 2013 but had spent much of the previous 18 months hiding his breathlessness from work colleagues. He would almost 'sneak' into work early so that no-one would see him arriving breathless.

His job was a big part of his identity and life. He enjoyed the camaraderie of his work colleagues and it has been hard to adjust to life after work.

Mark has also had to give up one of his favourite hobbies, working on old cars, because it just became too much. The loss of his job and his hobby, together with the overall change in his life and plans has, at times, filled him with feelings of worthlessness.

It was a chance sighting of a poster in his GP surgery for a

Respiratory Support Group that put Mark in touch with NICHS. He took the number and got in touch.

Mark hasn't looked back – in fact he hasn't missed a meeting.

There are similar feelings of camaraderie that he had experienced with work colleagues, in that everyone has similar experiences. And it has been an eye opener to realise that other people have similar thoughts, feelings and experiences.

Mark has also attended the Taking Control Programme and feels that this has helped him to plan things better. Mark urges people to make contact

with NICHS to help them in taking a step forward. "I have COPD but I manage it and I get on with it."

On behalf of Mark and everyone else in our Respiratory Groups we would like to thank the Big Lottery for the support it has given to these groups.



## Health Promotion And Disease Prevention

**For a small team, it's been a busy year. As always, the emphasis was on raising awareness of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle in preventing chest, heart and stroke illnesses.**

Our health promotion campaign "Life is Full of Choices... Don't Leave Yours up to Chance" was a great success in early 2014, delivering more than 500 health promotion packs to mainly

new contacts. The campaign also ran for four weeks in the Sunday Life.

We established a Community Health Champions pilot project in the Colin Glen and Taughmonagh areas of Belfast. The aim was to enlist local people to deliver health messages and programmes.

We revamped our Healthy Schools service to include different options for schools and now provide it across Northern Ireland. In 2013/14 we reached 3,500 young people with our health messages. Our new-look Chester, the mascot of the schools programme, has been a huge success.

Our nurses health checks in businesses and in the community identified 645 people with high level of risk factors, who were then referred to their GPs.

The demand for our health and homeless service is growing year on year.

For more information, please email [healthpromotion@nichs.org.uk](mailto:healthpromotion@nichs.org.uk)



## Health Checks - A Barometer Of Health

**Our health checks, carried out by our registered health promotion nurses, were more popular than ever this year.**

Our team delivered health checks or talks to 3,294 people - 2,152 male and 1,142 female in 79 businesses, 195 community organisations and 13 schools and attended 40 health fairs across Northern Ireland.



Judith Cochrane MLA with Maureen McCourt, NICHS

This year we identified a high number of people with undiagnosed risk factors. In all, 645 people, almost one fifth of all who attended, were referred to their GP with high blood pressure or cholesterol. Without our health checks these risks might not have been spotted and a cardiovascular episode might have been suffered. Judith Cochrane MLA, told us: "A health check with Northern Ireland Chest Heart & Stroke

showed me that my blood pressure was dangerously high and I was at risk of developing cardiovascular disease. Thanks to NICHS I went to my GP and now my blood pressure is under control."

Northern Ireland Electricity said it usually finds it hard to get employees to engage with health and well-being programmes but the company hopes to run this again in future, because it was such a success.

Another client commented: "I feel it is an invaluable service which reaches out to many people who perceive themselves to be well and don't attend their GP for screening."

If you would like to know more about the health check services we offer, please contact us on [healthpromotion@nichs.org.uk](mailto:healthpromotion@nichs.org.uk)

## Homeless Service Doubles Support

During this year the Health and Homeless Programme has provided health information and well-being events in hostels and drop-in centres to some of the most marginalised people in our community.

In fact, we have doubled the

number of homeless people we have supported this year, reaching 89 hostels and 637 people. We promote a 'healthy hostel' ethos, supporting positive mental health and well-being. This is important in helping people to avoid unhealthy lifestyles.

Events and information about smoking have been a high priority, because around four in five of hostel residents are smokers.

Smoking is the single greatest cause of preventable illness, with many of our homeless clients believing that their

habit has contributed to the onset of respiratory problems. Our health and homeless service is delivered in a sensitive and supportive way to encourage our homeless clients to quit smoking by:

- Offering one to one support sessions
- Working with local pharmacies to offer constant support locally
- Providing training to staff who work with homeless people.



## Valuable Lessons On Lifestyle

Over the last year our schools programme has been revamped with a new brand, image and service that maximised the limited resources available. In line with feedback received from pupils, teachers, staff and others, NICHS now offers a schools programme with 3 levels, all aiming to improve



lifestyles and reduce obesity. In 2013 6% of Northern Ireland children aged 2-10 were classified as obese and a fifth (19%) classified as being overweight.

**Level 1** of the programme involves presentations to

primary and secondary school classes across Northern Ireland. They cover healthy eating, smoking, physical activity and an overview of chest, heart and stroke illnesses. In 2013/14, we reached 12 primary, 8 secondary and 2 colleges. This involved more than 2,000 pupils.

**Level 2**, which is going live in September 2014, is a teachers' pack supporting healthy living. It also helps schools fundraise to help extend the programme.

**Level 3** is the revamped, targeted and evidence based 3 week Chester's Challenge for younger pupils, with new health promotion materials for pupils and parents, together with a pupil's workbook that can be used in the classroom.

**One teacher commented,** "There was a good balance between interactive, discussion, visual and group work activities. The children loved seeing, touching and talking about all the props (as did the adults)."

## Research – Our Investment In The Future

Over the past 19 years we have invested more than £6.6m in research in our hospitals and universities. We have supported 72 research projects, resulting in some notable advances in the prevention, treatment and care of people living with chest, heart and stroke conditions.

### Leading The Way On Asthma

We have funded 21 research projects at the Centre of Infection and Immunity at Queen's University. Much of this research focused on difficult to treat asthma patients who are at a high risk of asthma death.

This research contributed to:

- National Severe Asthma Patient Registry (2007).
- Respiratory Framework Standards for Respiratory Care in NI (2007).
- NICE Asthma standards 2013.

Madeline Ennis (pictured) received the Roger Lowry Award on behalf of herself and her colleagues at the NICHS Research Conference 2013 in recognition of this work.

### Sleep Breakthrough

NICHS funded sleep apnoea



research at Belfast City Hospital, resulting so far in the implementation of sleep clinics and a Regional Lead Consultant in sleep.

Sleep apnoea is characterised by interrupted breathing during sleep. It results in several physical effects, which increase people's risk of cardiovascular disease.

### Unlocking Mystery Of Genetic Disorder

Familial Hypercholesterolaemia (FH)

is a genetic condition leading to abnormally high cholesterol. Our research together with our start-up funding for the first ever FH screening service, has led to:

- Changes in clinical guidelines.
- A Northern Ireland-wide FH screening service launched in 2014.
- Hundreds of lives changed for the better and many lives saved.

### Biggest Ever Stroke Trial

NICHS is funding a very early randomised controlled trial that will change practice in the treatment of stroke worldwide. It is the largest stroke rehabilitation trial ever conducted. It will hopefully provide evidence to transform the training of health professionals in dealing with the critical early stages of recovery.

### Baby Hearts Study

The largest research grant awarded in 2013 was to Professor Helen Dolk and colleagues at the University of Ulster and Paediatric Cardiology Department at the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children who are researching risk factors and preventative measures for congenital heart disease in babies.

## Lobbying And Campaigning

Our public affairs work continues to keep a watching brief on a wide range of issues ranging from cardiac and stroke services through to access to new medicines and the provision of home oxygen services.

However, as smoking remains the single greatest cause of preventable illness and premature death in Northern Ireland, killing around 2,300 people each year, smoking was a key priority for us in 2013/14.

### Plain packaging for cigarettes

The prospect of rebellion by Conservative members of the House of Lords forced the Westminster government to legislate for the introduction of standardised or plain packaging for cigarettes in February 2014. For a brief while it looked as if Northern Ireland was the only part of the UK where this legislation would not come into force but NICHS lobbied Ministers to ensure we were not left behind.

### Tobacco Retailers Act (NI) 2014

The Tobacco Retailers Act received

Royal Assent on 25 March 2014. The Act was unrecognisable from the Bill that had been introduced in the Assembly in April 2013.

The initial Bill contained a framework of offences that looked as though few people would ever face prosecution, but NICHS worked closely with the MLAs on the Health Committee to ensure that the Bill was considerably strengthened.

The Bill was changed to include a centralised register of those who sell tobacco which will improve co-ordination and co-operation. The prospect of offenders having to be convicted three times in three years was amended to a more realistic three offences over five years.

Perhaps the most important addition was the amendment making it an offence for adults to buy cigarettes for children – a measure which NICHS specifically asked for. As a result, 'proxy buying' is now an

offence in Northern Ireland.

We are delighted to have been able to work closely with the Assembly to improve this legislation. We will

continue to work to ensure that enforcement of the Act is properly resourced and pursued.

### Smoking in Cars carrying children

While England, Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland are moving in the direction of a ban on smoking in cars

carrying children, the Health Minister has no current plans to legislate in Northern Ireland.

This will form a central part of our public affairs activity in the near future. Eight out of 10 people in Northern Ireland support a ban on smoking in cars carrying children, as shown by a survey commissioned by NICHS in February 2014, so the failure of Stormont to address the issue needs to be challenged. NICHS has launched a campaign to engage the public on this issue and to push it up the political agenda.



## NICHS Research Strategy 2014 – 2018

**Our new Research Strategy for 2014 – 2018 aims to ensure that researchers applying for NICHS funds demonstrate clear and measurable benefits for the people of Northern Ireland at the end of their work.**

We will continue to fund only research that is of high quality and uses appropriate research methods.

Applications will undergo a rigorous external peer review process before being considered by our Scientific Research Committee.

The committee will include from January 2015 two lay representatives who represent patients and members of the public.

The Committee will meet in January 2015 to assess the applications, putting forward recommendations for funding allocations to the Governance Board.

### There are four key stages to the strategy:

Funding high quality research that meets our research goals as well as other rigorous funding criteria.

Signing off contracts with the successful applicants and then monitoring progress of the research.

Evaluating the impact and potential benefits of our research on an annual basis.

Communicating the findings of our research to the people of Northern Ireland including our donors and supporters.

# WE'RE ON YOUR SIDE

# Community Round-Up



## Family Raise A Fortune

The McMullan family of Jonesborough, Co Down (pictured above) recently presented NICHS with a cheque for a staggering £28,127, raised in memory of their beloved family member, Tatty McMullan.

Tatty was a popular and much loved member of the Jonesborough community and the entire area supported a number of events in his memory, including a Night at the Races, street collection and sponsored spin.

## The Perfect Gift

Ivan Kirk from Dromore, Co Down raised almost £600 by asking guests at his 50th birthday party to make a donation to NICHS instead of gifts.

Racing enthusiast Ivan suffered a major heart attack on the way home from a rally several years ago and wanted to 'give back' and help others living with cardiac problems.

Anyone can follow his example and make a donation in lieu of gifts on any big occasion – see [www.nichs.org.uk/celebrate](http://www.nichs.org.uk/celebrate)

## Night To Remember

The Allen family from Benburb, Co Tyrone (pictured right) raised more than £9,000 towards our work by holding a barn dance and barbecue at their farm in October. The event, in memory of their beloved family members Robert and Nellie Allen, was well supported by the local community who helped make it a night to remember.



hand during the event to take blood pressure readings. Well done to Noel McKee and colleagues for raising £203.

## Chariots Of Fire!

Members of the Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service (NIFRS) showed their continued support for our work in September as they tackled a sponsored cycle from Carrickfergus to Carnfunock, returning to the Royal Oak Bar in Carrickfergus for a barbecue, raising £1,092.63

## Going The Distance

In October, forty firefighters gathered at the Lagan Valley Leisureplex and successfully tackled 1,000k of fitness endurance over a two-hour period using the pool, treadmills, spin bikes and rowing machines. NICHS's health promotion staff member was on

## Golfers Club Together To Raise Funds

In memory of Bob Walker BEM, Cairndhu Golf Club held a weekend of events in March in celebration of his life and contribution to the club. Bob Walker was one of Ireland's top golfers and was the Professional at Cairndhu for more than 50 years. The weekend celebrations included a Grand Charity Bowls Match, a Gala Celebration Dinner & Dance, and a charity Stableford Golf Competition. At the request of Bob's family, the proceeds from all the events - £3,500 - were donated to NICHS.

## Tennent's Cheers With £20,000 Donation

**NICHS is celebrating a windfall of £20,000 thanks to the generosity of the employees of Tennent's NI.**

Tennent's employees set an ambitious £20,000 target and embarked on a twelve month fundraising spree. From mega donations gathered at high profile events such as Tennent's Vital to coppers in the collection boxes, staff left no charity stone unturned.

Jeff Tosh, Head of NI On Trade at Tennent's NI, is hugely proud of the team. He said: "Our company takes corporate social responsibility seriously and we have a great

tradition of choosing and working for a nominated charity each year. With 50% of all adult deaths in Northern Ireland caused by chest, heart or stroke illness, NICHS is a good cause which strikes an immediate chord.

"Staff came up with the strapline 'We're at the heart of it' to help raise awareness and maintain commitment company wide, but the slogan was equally well received by our friends and partners in the licensed trade who responded to our appeals for donations with their customary generosity. It was a fantastic achievement for all concerned and we all feel privileged to be in a position to offer a helping hand to such a wonderful organisation."

NICHS is very grateful to everyone who made donations, helped organise fundraising events and created such a positive aura around supporting its work.



## Fundraising With A Touch Of Luxury



**NICHS has been named charity partner of the year by Belfast's award-winning Merchant Hotel.**

A team from the hotel tackled the 2014 Belfast City Marathon Relay, while The Merchant's Fashion Teas also raised money for the charity. Alison McLaughlin, manager of The Gymnasium and The Spa at The Merchant Hotel said: "The aims and objectives of the charity fit well with our approach to wellness, health and nutrition at The Merchant Gymnasium, so there's a natural synergy." Andrew Dougal said: "The money raised through this valuable partnership will make a real difference to local people."

## Why We Need Your Company's Support

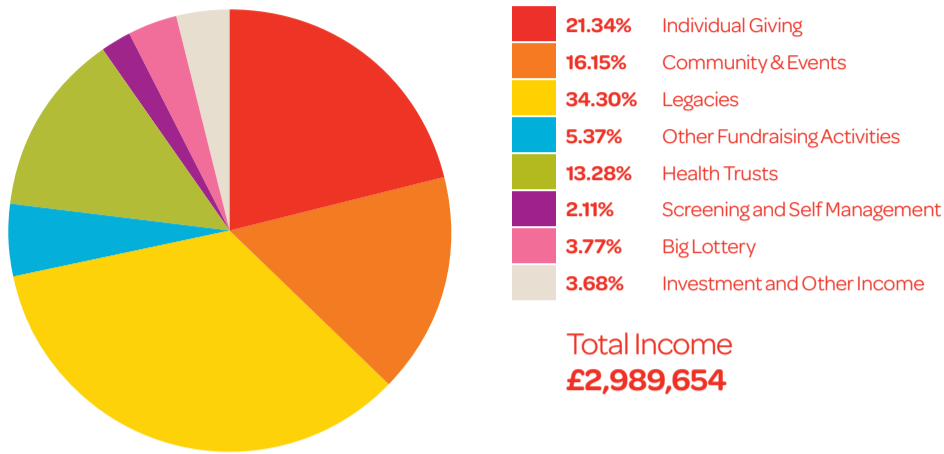
Corporate support makes a huge difference to our ability to offer support to local people impacted by long term health conditions, and carry out our health promotion, research, lobbying and advocacy work to prevent ill health in others.

So why should your company get involved? We can't put it any better than Neil Cairns, Vice President and Managing Director of BE Aerospace. He said: "Working with NICHS fulfilled our pledge to give something back to the community, but our employees benefited greatly too. Not only was it a great team bonding exercise but it gave us all unique insight into the valuable work undertaken by the charity."

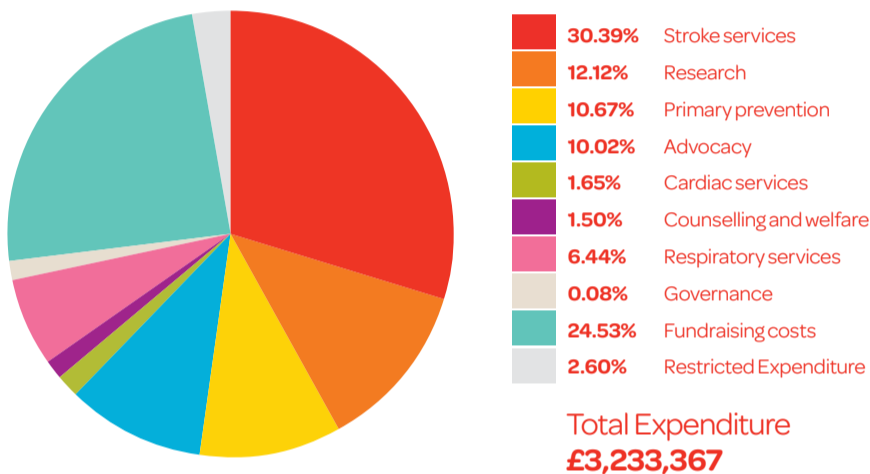
To find out more, please contact Debbie at [ddagan@nichs.org.uk](mailto:ddagan@nichs.org.uk) or call us on 028 90 320184.

# Our Accounts 2013-14

## Where Our Income Comes From



## Where Our Income Goes



## Heartfelt Thanks To Our Volunteers

Regardless of your age, income, religious or cultural background, you could help us make a difference by volunteering with NICHS.

We have 404 active volunteers who bring skills, advice, experience, friendship, vision, leadership and inspiration to the organisation. But we always need more.

Research shows that volunteering is good for your physical and mental well-being. It also helps develop new skills and gives you an important addition to your CV if you're looking for a job in the future. Volunteers tell us it offers them an opportunity to grow in confidence, meet new people, and enjoy the sense of achievement and satisfaction that comes from helping others.

This year we were re-accredited with the Investing in Volunteers award, which provides an excellent foundation on which



**Anna Thompson receives an award for 42 years of volunteering from Governance Board member Ann Hayes MBE**

to build good practice, maintain standards and keep NICHS focused in relation to the volunteering experience.

Volunteers give us time - the most precious resource in anyone's life. So how do we put a value on something that is priceless? We can't. But from everyone at NICHS we can say a heartfelt thank you to our amazing volunteers who so generously give their time, warmth, humour and caring.

# NICHS Members

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Dorinda, Lady Dunleath

### President

Sir William Hastings KB CBE

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Professor MPS Varma

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**WE'RE ON YOUR SIDE**

## Running For Dear Life

**More than 300 people joined the NICHS Run to Remember team in the annual Deep RiverRock Belfast Marathon on May 5 2013. Here, two runners share their very personal reasons for taking part.**

Gillian Abraham (30) from Lurgan put on her running shoes in memory of her father, Martin Davis, who died from a heart attack 10 years ago, aged just 54. Gillian said: "My dad died very suddenly. He went out to work as usual one day and that was the last time we saw him. Last year I started to run to lose weight and get fit, and I did a three mile race and then the Belfast Half Marathon in September with my brother James. I thought it would be good to mark dad's 10th anniversary by doing the full marathon in his memory.

"NICHS is such a good cause. My father in law had a stroke and we have seen how much the charity has helped him to get back on his feet."

Lurgan woman Sinead Tighe (25) lost her dad Malachi to coronary heart disease in May 2003. He was only 39. She said: "Last year my brother Stephen and I joined the Run to Remember team and completed 17 miles in memory of Dad because it was his 10th anniversary. Our brother Malachi, who's 14, was too young to take part in the marathon so instead raised money by



Gillian Abraham runs the Belfast City Marathon for NICHS.

packing groceries in a local supermarket. Altogether we raised £3,675. "My dad loved life and he lived it to the full in his short time. His death was very sudden. It was devastating for all of us.

"I had run the half marathon in Londonderry in 2009 and decided to run the Belfast Marathon on his 10th anniversary as a way of doing something positive to remember him. We also held a fundraising disco. It was lovely to know that 10 years on people hadn't forgotten him.

"NICHS was very supportive of what we wanted to do and gave us a lot of

advice and help. I would definitely encourage people to think about running for NICHS."

Make this the year you join the NICHS Run to Remember Team – choose any race, at any pace! Just let us know you are running for us and we will support you every step of the way with fundraising tips, a running vest, regular updates and training advice. We would love to hear from you!

Check out our own Run to Remember events at [www.nichs.org.uk/runtoremember](http://www.nichs.org.uk/runtoremember) or visit [www.facebook.com/runtorememberNICHS](http://www.facebook.com/runtorememberNICHS).



## WANTED: Volunteers To Make A Difference

**NICHS is looking for people who can help us raise awareness and vital funds in the community. If you can spare some time, we have five key fundraising volunteer roles that might suit your talents and skills.**

### They are:

**Community Fundraising Leader** – someone who will take the lead in an area, recruiting more supporters and initiating events or collections.

**Ambassador** – someone who will represent the charity in accepting cheques / giving short speeches.

**Community Volunteer** – someone we can call on to help with collections or distribution of materials in their local area

**Static Box Collector** – someone who will take responsibility for placing and changing static boxes in their local area and banking the money collected.

**Events Marshal** – someone who is a hardy individual to help marshal our exciting programme of fundraising events.

If you can spare even an hour of your time, please contact Orla on 028 9032 0184 or email [oclarke@nichs.org.uk](mailto:oclarke@nichs.org.uk)



Email is one of the most effective ways for NICHS to keep in touch. To ensure our funds go where they are needed most we would like to send you our Review and other information by email.

If you would like to help us do so, please provide your address in the space provided.

If we don't hear from you, we'll continue to contact you by post.

Alternatively, you can email us at [mail@nichs.org.uk](mailto:mail@nichs.org.uk)

Email address\*

\*In providing my email address I am happy to receive emails from NICHS

Please return this slip to:  
NICHS, Freepost, License No BE503,  
Belfast, BT2 7BR



### Contact

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