



Dr Roger Lowry OBE FRCP

chairman's letter



Dr Roger Lowry welcomes the Earl of Wessex to 21 Dublin Road



Staff members Donna Anderson, Mona Duddy, Adele Leighton, Brian McCloskey, Anne Marie Doherty, Rita Heaney and Liam Quigley at the new North West centre in Derry

There were many highlights during the year under review, but I was personally delighted to see the introduction of legislation to give Northern Ireland smoke-free work environments and public places by April 2007. It was appropriate that the announcement was made in the middle of our 60th anniversary year. I congratulate everyone who has worked hard on the issue of tobacco control for decades, and look forward to the day in the not too distant future when public places everywhere in the UK and Ireland will be uncontaminated by tobacco smoke.

It was also a great honour during our jubilee year to welcome the Earl of Wessex, HRH Prince Edward, as he opened our new headquarters at 21 Dublin Road, Belfast. It was wonderful that he was able to spend time with clients, volunteers and staff.

I want to congratulate all those who played a role in the reconstruction of the building. The Director of Corporate Services, John McCreary, the Project Manager, Architect, other advisors and the Contractors all contributed to a very successful outcome. In particular I want to thank Ulster Garden Villages Ltd. for their generous donation of £100k.

The Board was happy to approve a proposal from the Senior Management Team to establish a centre in the North West region in Londonderry. It plays an essential role not just in providing services, but also in demonstrating that we are working on behalf of people in every area of Northern Ireland.

I was delighted to hear of the great success of the research meeting where those who received grants from the charity presented their work. Our thanks are due to Professor Walter Holland and his expert volunteers on the Scientific Research Grants Committee. It was very positive that Professor Alistair Buchan of the Department of Medicine at the University of Oxford, whose work on thrombolysis is world renowned, gave the keynote speech at the meeting.

The Board was pleased to hear that legacy income has been particularly good. One legacy in particular, from the late Mr Frederick Poskitt, is worth more than £1m. Mr Poskitt generously divided the bulk of his wealth between this charity and Cancer Research.

Finally, as always, I want to place on record my thanks to our Board Members, Council Members and all those who give of their time as volunteers to provide services to clients or to raise funds. Congratulations to the Chief Executive, Senior Management Team and staff on the many innovations and advances which have been achieved in the work of NICHHS.

Yours sincerely

Dr Roger Lowry OBE FRCP FRCPI
Chairman



Andrew Dougal OBE FCIPR Chief Executive

overview & research

As the Chairman has pointed out, the most significant public health decision in many years was taken in October 2005 when the Health Minister decided that all workplaces and public places in Northern Ireland would be smoke free. It was a vindication of this charity's work over many years in calling for such a measure, and in demanding an end to tobacco promotion.

We were also delighted to see another government measure designed to reduce people's waiting time for an initial outpatient appointment. We had been warning regularly that the waiting times for first appointments to see a Cardiologist or a Neurologist were increasing at a very great rate. We will continue to keep an eye on the situation.



The Stroke Strategy Implementation Group



Supported by



Many advances have been made in the implementation of the Stroke Strategy for the Eastern Health Board. The team involved has ensured that task forces have been set up to put the strategy into practice in the various Trusts. Some funding has been transferred from hospital services to the community, and it is essential that these funds are used to enhance the quality of care for stroke clients. However, the charity is gravely concerned that in some instances hospitals may be tempted to close stroke beds.

All but three hospitals in Northern Ireland have established Stroke Units. However, none of the Stroke Units have sufficient beds to ensure that every patient will spend the optimal time in their care. It is therefore essential that no beds in Stroke Units are closed, given the huge contribution that such units make to a patient's recovery.

The Audit on stroke by the Royal College of Physicians has shown that Northern Ireland has a high density of Stroke Units. It appears, however, that the service in England is improving at a much faster rate than that provided locally. We hope that Hospital Trusts which are falling short in certain areas will make it an urgent priority to address these matters.

We were successful in our campaign to persuade the broadcasting watchdog, OFCOM, to consider the option of a ban on the television advertising of junk food to children before the 9pm watershed. Until we intervened, no such option was on offer. At the time of writing, the organisation is considering the public responses to its consultation.

NI Chest Heart and Stroke convened a working group in October 2005 to discuss issues relating to the prevention of sudden cardiac death in young people, after the death of young athletes including Cormac McAnallen and John McCall. It was chaired by Governance Board member Dr Mahendra Varma, Cardiologist at the Erne Hospital, Enniskillen and past President of the Irish Cardiac Society.

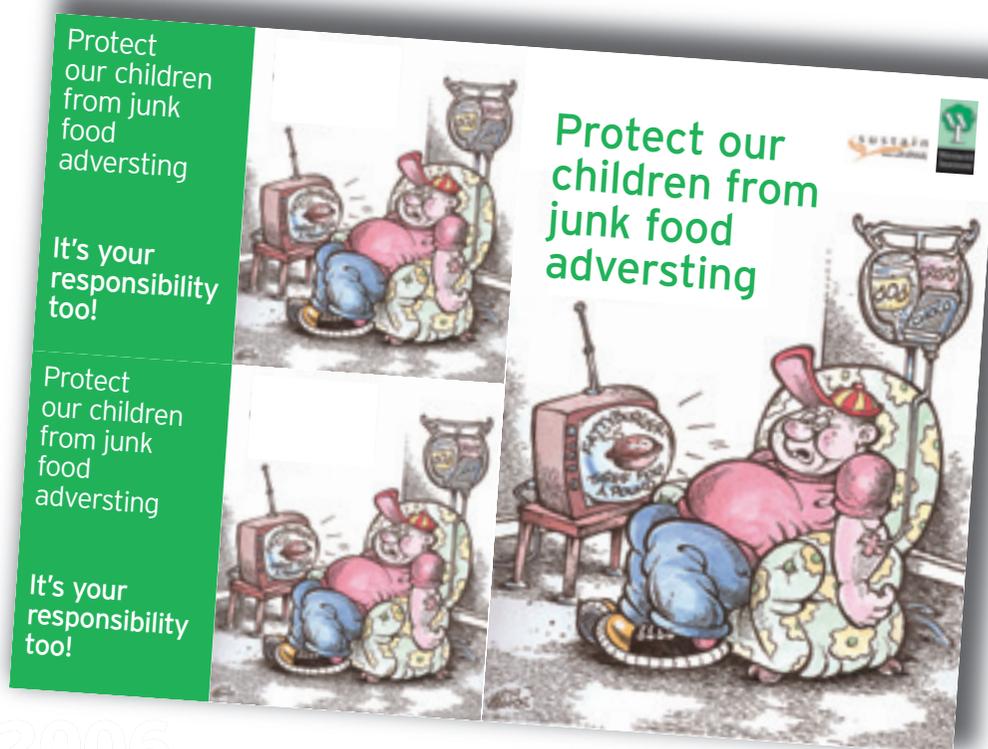
The aim of the group was to produce guidelines for GPs, cardiologists, physicians and paediatricians in Northern Ireland for the screening and assessment of those at risk.

Following discussions by the working group, we have recommended the use of the Lausanne Protocol. Parents of those wishing to undertake sport at a high level should be questioned to ensure that there has been no history of sudden death at a young age in any relative. If such a situation has occurred, further investigation ought to take place. Guidelines were circulated to all GPs, cardiologists, cardiac surgeons, physicians and paediatricians in Northern Ireland.

Research projects approved by NI Chest, Heart and Stroke in the year under review are as follows:

- 1 Dr Marilyn Armstrong, Queen's University Belfast "Comparison of dendritic cell maturation and migration in patients undergoing cardiac surgery with and without cardiopulmonary bypass" - £21,030
- 2 Professor Elisabeth Trimble, Queen's University Belfast "Endothelial dysfunction: interaction of hyperglycaemia and fatty acids to cause oxidative damage and monocyte binding to endothelial cells" - £20,050
- 3 Dr Joe Kidney, Mater Hospital "Viral infection in presymptomatic smokers with COPD" - £45,944
- 4 Dr Greg Skibinski, Queen's University Belfast "Effects of chronic exposure to IL-13 on mucociliary differentiation of bronchial epithelial cells obtained from normal and asthmatic children" - £46,642

Andrew Dougal OBE
Chief Executive





Myrtle Neill Director of Health

report of the director of health

This has been another extremely busy but exciting year. We have developed new ways of taking our health promotion message into the community, working closely with Down Lisburn Trust on a screening service supported by the Big Lottery Fund. It is aimed at stroke prevention and focuses on risk assessment and education on healthy lifestyle. We have also forged links with a pharmaceutical company to offer screening programmes at its pharmacy branches throughout Northern Ireland. We continue to provide health assessment and promotion services to companies both large and small around the province.

This year has seen further developments in our Young Stroke programmes, with the emphasis on returning to employment or retraining. Our Moving On projects for younger stroke survivors in Armagh / Dungannon and in Foyle were runners-up in the Stroke Innovation Awards and were highly commended for their work.

We also launched a film for stroke survivors, featuring people who have been through the experience and made a good recovery. We hope it will be a source of strength to stroke sufferers and their families.

Currently we are helping 820 people in our Volunteer Stroke Schemes. In recent years we have helped 407 young stroke patients come to terms with the consequences of the condition and to review and renew their lives. As well as that, our Stroke Family Support Schemes are helping 816 families and 1,224 carers, whose lives are also changed overnight when stroke strikes.

Our specialised communication groups help those 20% of stroke patients with speech or communication problems. This is done in either a group setting or on a one-to-one basis. Computer training has been a great success and has improved the communication skills of many of our stroke clients. It opens up new social networks and outlets.



The Armagh Dungannon Young Stroke Project team release balloons to celebrate the 60th anniversary.



Una Bourke, Treasurer Fermanagh Support Group, Norma Ferguson, Myrtle Neill, Brian McCloskey and Marie Kelly with members of the Fermanagh Stroke Services team. Also pictured is Bert Johnson, Chairman of Fermanagh District Council.



Claire Hopkins,
Paediatric Cardiac
Liaison Nurse

We secured funding to establish a Children's Heart Nurse Service, the first of its kind in Northern Ireland. This service provides support, advice and professional expertise to those families whose baby has been born with or acquires a heart condition. We are grateful for the financial, moral and practical support of BBC Children in Need, Heartbeat and the directors and staff of the Northern Bank.

A Respiratory and Cardiac Co-ordinator is currently developing a support network for respiratory and cardiac clients. The aim is to expand greatly our community services for people in these groups.

Foyle Local Health & Social Care Group, under the direction of Paul Kavanagh, provided the development funds for a support programme for people with COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease). Groups have been meeting in Londonderry, Strabane and Limavady.

None of our work would be possible without the dedication of our staff and volunteers, who consistently give more than is asked of them. The well being of the clients and carers is the focus of their work. Our volunteers are, as always, the cornerstone of NICHS services.

Our Home Care Support in Sperrin Lakeland Trust has been a lifeline to many people suffering from multiple health conditions such as chest, heart and stroke illnesses. The fact that we are providing this service on behalf of, and in conjunction with, the Trust casts the charity in a very positive light. We appreciate the tireless work of the staff involved, who provide this service throughout the year, whatever the weather.

Myrtle Neill
Director of Health

Dear Friend,

As you know the work of NI Chest Heart & Stroke depends on the generosity of the people of Northern Ireland. Our single largest source of income is from legacies.

I am writing this note asking that, when you are making a Will, you consider making a provision to support the work of this charity.

If you wish to direct the money towards a particular part of our work, your solicitor can advise you how you should stipulate that.

Many individuals divide the remainder of their Estate between children, relatives, friends and charities. Any donation made to the charity in a Will, will be free of Inheritance Tax.

If you would like further information please contact Andrew Dougal, Chief Executive, Denny Elliott, Director of Fundraising or Alison Vidamour, telephone 028 9032 0184. Alternatively, you may prefer to make this contact through your solicitor.

Please know that any legacy, no matter what size, will benefit those suffering from these illnesses and may also advance research into both the treatment and prevention in Northern Ireland.

I want to thank you for taking the time to read this Annual Review.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely

DR ROGER LOWRY OBE FRCP FRCPI



Denny Elliott Director of Fundraising

report of the director of fundraising



Staff from the Northern Bank who participated in the Causeway Walk

Since the start of 2006, we have been celebrating our 60th birthday or, as we prefer to put it, 60 years at the heart of care in Northern Ireland.

The celebrations have revolved around the running of birthday parties and cake cutting in the Mayors' Parlours of every one of the 26 council areas in Northern Ireland. We are grateful to all the Lord Mayors, Mayors and Council Chairpersons within each town and city for their participation, support and encouragement.

We have also been running a number of very special events to mark the year including the very successful McCausland Group Gala Ball (raising £43,000), the Causeway Walk (£11,000) and the Volunteer Celebration Day at the Tullyglass Hotel, Ballymena, which had 300 volunteers in attendance.

We look forward to another 60 years of service to the people of Northern Ireland and in particular to the challenge of finding new treatments and cures for chest, heart and stroke illness and to the development of new and innovative services.

The support we receive from the general public continues to grow as once again we had a very successful fundraising year.

This year legacy income reached a very positive £790k. This highlights the fact that the community in Northern Ireland has absolute faith in the work we do. Indeed the number of people who are giving to NICHS on a monthly or annual basis has also been growing rapidly. More than 1,000 people have now registered to give through direct debits. This allows us to plan our spending on services more effectively, since the income from this source is guaranteed.

One of the highlights of the past year has been the wonderful charity partnership which we have developed with the Northern Bank. The bank and its staff have contributed a remarkable £127,000 towards our work. This has been one of the most successful charity/business partnerships in recent years and we are grateful to all those involved.

Very many thanks also to Irwin's Bakery, whose management and staff continue to fundraise tirelessly on our behalf.

Once again our Fundraising Support Network maintained a high level of commitment, with a contribution of £222k being raised. This achievement is all the more impressive given the current competition in fundraising.

Donations in Lieu of Flowers continue to make a very significant impact with £231k being donated by the families and friends of those who have lost loved ones. We are very grateful to everyone who thought of others at a time of personal grief.

Denny Elliott
Director of Fundraising



Back Row: Brian McCloskey, John McCreary and Norma Ferguson
Front Row: Marie Kelly, Albert Porter, Chairman of Omagh Support Group and Mayor of Omagh Sean Begley prepare to cut the 60th birthday cake



Christopher McCausland, Glynis McCausland, Naomi Martin and Stephen McCausland, hosts of the McCausland Group Gala Ball



Staff from the Northern Bank at the launch of the Duck Derby



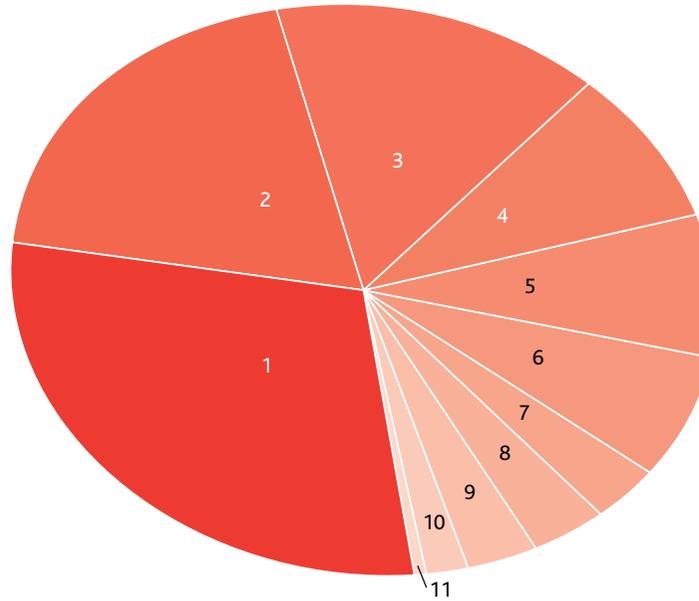
John McCreary FCA
Director of Corporate Services

corporate services

NICHSA
ANNUAL REPORT

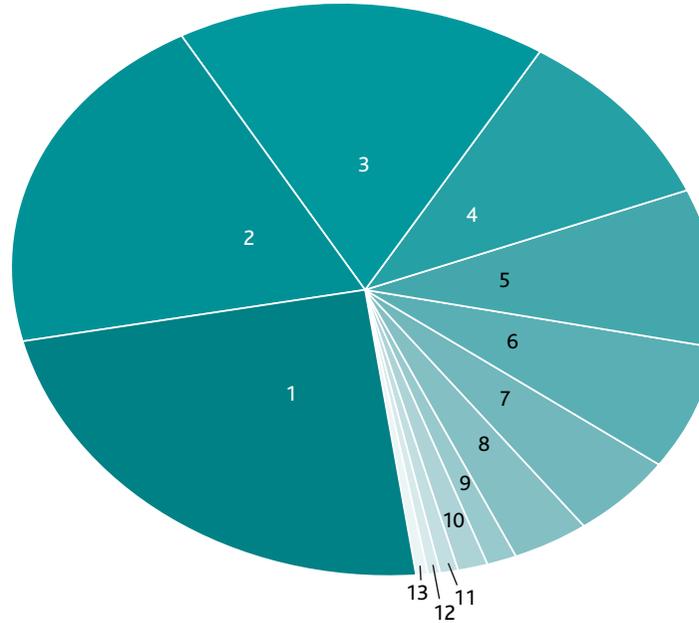
Financial Figures

31st MARCH 2006



INCOMING RESOURCES

	£	%
1 LEGACIES	790,333	28.9%
2 DONATIONS	537,287	19.6%
3 NEW OPPORTUNITIES FUND	411,513	15.0%
4 DONATIONS IN LIEU OF FLOWERS	230,922	8.4%
5 SUPPORT GROUPS	221,758	8.1%
6 GRANTS & CONTRACTS	196,228	7.2%
7 PROFIT ON DISPOSAL OF FIXED ASSETS	95,323	3.5%
8 OTHER RESTRICTED FUNDING	94,843	3.5%
9 HEALTH SERVICES	93,659	3.4%
10 INVESTMENT INCOME	51,769	1.9%
11 OTHER INCOME	10,724	0.4%
Total	2,734,359	100.0%



RESOURCES EXPENDED

	£	%
1 STROKE SERVICES	510,610	23.5%
2 NEW OPPORTUNITIES FUND PROJECTS	440,829	20.3%
3 FUNDRAISING & APPEALS	365,013	16.8%
4 CORPORATE SERVICES	216,902	10.0%
5 RESEARCH	191,480	8.8%
6 PRIMARY CARE	158,149	7.3%
7 ADVOCACY	107,523	4.9%
8 OTHER RESTRICTED FUNDS	78,725	3.6%
9 RESPIRATORY SERVICES	32,452	1.5%
10 CARDIAC SERVICES	31,423	1.4%
11 DEPRECIATION	19,249	0.9%
12 COUNSELLING & WELFARE	13,577	0.6%
13 GOVERNANCE COSTS	6,257	0.3%
Total	2,172,189	100.0%

Our Members at 31st March 2006

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Dr T Trouton

Dr M Varma

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SENIOR

MANAGEMENT TEAM

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Mrs Myrtle Neill

Director of

Corporate Services

Mr John McCreary

Director of Fundraising

Mr Denny Elliott

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Dr Pascal McKeown, Queen's University Belfast

Prof Sean Strain, University of Ulster

Prof Alun Evans, Queen's University Belfast

Prof Frank Dobbs, University of Ulster

Dr Karen Bailie, Clinical Research Grants Committee

Prof Gary McVeigh, Queen's University Belfast

We are also very grateful to those who voluntarily assist in the post implementation evaluation of research projects.

Scientific Research Grants Committee members give a very considerable amount of time and expertise to contribute to the objective assessment of research grant applications. Independent peer reviewers also donate their time and expertise to provide objective assessments of proposed projects.