

The Review

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

Chest Heart & Stroke

This Charity Saved my Life



Belfast father-of-two Paddy Lynas once thought his life was over. He suffered from depression over his newly diagnosed lung disease, the resulting loss of his job and the death of several close family members.

Now, just a couple of years later, he walks 12 miles a day and is off all medication. He no longer takes drugs to control his chest condition, bronchiectasis. And he puts it all down to the help he received from Northern Ireland Chest Heart & Stroke.

"Seven years ago, my father, who was my hero, died. Then I lost three more of my family, my mother and two sisters, within 18 months of each other," he said. "Meanwhile, I was struggling with this lung disease that I was told would not improve. It seemed to me that I was in a pit with no way of getting

out. Then I got a letter from Pauline Millar, who runs the Taking Control Self-Management Programme for people with conditions like mine, asking me to join.

"To be honest, I wasn't sure it was going to work. I was depressed, I found it hard to breathe and my skin was grey. But part of the idea of self-management is that you make a promise about what you hope to achieve. I said I would walk three miles, and I did. Then I promised I would walk six. After that I managed nine and decided I should extend it to eleven. Everybody said I would never manage it, but I felt great. I started to walk into the country, then to the zoo. I'd meet people I knew miles away from the house, and they'd ask me if I needed a lift home, but I told them I was walking.

"Before too long, I'd lost more than two stones in weight and stopped all my tablets. Walking is my medicine now. But if it hadn't been for Pauline and NI Chest Heart & Stroke, I simply wouldn't be here today. They saved my life."

To give something back, Paddy did the Belfast City Marathon to raise

funds. People were not sure he would manage the full 26 miles, but he said: "I told them I would run it, walk it or skip it. And when I finished, I felt as if I could do it all over again. When I thought of how I used to be, I felt as if all my Christmases had come at once.

"I don't ever want to go back to the way I was. The doctor tells me my lung function has improved. I never get a taxi or a bus – I just walk everywhere. I used to be a chef, and since my health has improved I've started cooking again. It's like a new lease of life.

"That's why I've decided that from now on, I'm going to live my life for others. NI Chest Heart & Stroke gave me my life back, so I'm going to do everything I can to help anyone else who might find themselves in a similar position."

A Helping Hand

Page 2



Future Care Services Model

Page 3



Children's Health – A Challenge for the Future

Page 4



Child Heart Study tops Research List

Page 5



The Northern Ireland Baby Hearts Study

Events Round Up

Page 6



WE'RE ON YOUR SIDE

Chairman's Report



I am pleased to report an extensive expansion of our services.

In particular I am delighted to see the very large number of self-management programmes which have been completed during the last year. These programmes enable patients to manage their own conditions and to have a much greater understanding of their illnesses.

Another positive outcome is that the number of deaths

from heart disease in Northern Ireland continues to fall. In the last 6 years there has been a 21% decrease. In the same period, deaths from stroke have declined by 19%. This means, however, that there is a greater need for support for survivors. It is essential that the Health Service addresses this issue.

On the negative side, there has been a small increase in the number of deaths from respiratory disease (2%). It is anticipated that, worldwide, deaths from chest illnesses will increase in the years ahead. There are an estimated 35,000 COPD patients in our community. That is why we have continued to provide respiratory support groups even though funding from the Big Lottery has ended.

If we look at these figures over a longer period of time, chest, heart and stroke illnesses in 1981 accounted for 65% of Northern Ireland

deaths. Now these illnesses account for just under 50%. This is due to improved treatment in the Health Service and because of health promotion campaigns like those run by NICHS.

Clot-busting drugs to combat stroke are now available in nearly every general hospital in Northern Ireland. In addition, many more clinics for mini-stroke (TIA) have been established. Together, these two measures should go a considerable distance in reducing the incidence of stroke disability.

During the year a number of members decided to leave Council, because of heavy commitments elsewhere. I want to convey to all Council and Board members how much we appreciate their vital role in the successful running of this charity.

I want to pay tribute to Alvin McKinley who has completed no less than 10 years' service

on the Board. Alvin brought his extensive skills and knowledge from the public sector.

Dr Michael Power, Consultant Stroke Physician, also completed his term on the Board. For many years, Michael has been one of Northern Ireland's key figures in driving forward the evolution of the stroke strategy and stroke care.

I want to thank all our volunteers – those in our care services who help those affected by illness and those who help with fundraising. Your perseverance at a time of economic difficulty is greatly appreciated.

Thanks also to the Chief Executive, the senior management team and all the staff for their hard work and for their development of our work for the people of Northern Ireland.

**Professor MPS Varma
Chairman**

NICHS: A Year in Figures 2012/13

Over 4,000 people with chest, heart and stroke illnesses and their families and carers were supported by NICHS in 2012-13. That is 33% more demand for our services than last year.

NICHS Stroke Family Support had 1461 new referrals, which equates to one third of the total annual number of strokes, and made 2715 home visits.

NICHS ran 22 Stroke Schemes and 7 Young Stroke Groups helping 654 people across Northern Ireland.

NICHS ran 23 Respiratory Schemes helping 576 people, an increase of 33% over last year.

100 people took part in the new "Moving On" - Post Rehabilitation Service, piloted in the Southern Health and Social CareTrust.

13 Self Management Programmes were held helping 165 people, an increase of 22%.

£29,591 was awarded in NICHS Welfare Grants to 124 families in financial hardship because of chest, heart and stroke illnesses.

This year we awarded more than £350,000 in research grants to professionals working in our local hospitals and universities, 28% more than 2011-12.

Our NICHS Health Promotion Nurses visited 52 different organisations to carry out health assessments.

We took our Schools Health Programme to 65 different primary schools and after-school clubs.

Chief Executive's Report



One of the most positive developments this year has been the decision by the Health & Social Care Board to fund a screening programme for familial hypercholesterolaemia (FH), which causes an inherited form of heart disease. We have been pushing for this for years. Our decision to meet the set-up costs of £37,000 was the catalyst for action.

This followed extensive lobbying of MLAs, the Health Committee at Stormont and the Minister. This is a truly positive result which will save lives in Northern Ireland.

We continue to fund vital research in the hospitals and universities of Northern Ireland. We are particularly pleased that we are about to fund a major study aimed at preventing babies being born with congenital heart disease.

Each year, we receive research funding applications amounting to almost 10 times the money we have available. While there has been a major advance in the number and quality of proposals for respiratory research at Queen's University, we would like to see the university dedicating more resources

to the cardiovascular field (heart disease and stroke).

We commend the University of Ulster for its commitment to stroke research in particular, as well as human nutrition and other areas.

This has been a difficult year financially. We maintained our level of expenditure on services despite reduced income. In particular, it was essential to continue with our respiratory support groups after the Big Lottery funding ended. It had been hoped that the Health Service would fund this service, but despite much discussion and lobbying it was unable to do so. We had a deficit of just over £500,000 at the end of the financial year.

The Board has resolved that this deficit will be reduced

and eradicated by 2015. This may mean targeting of our resources and ensuring that there is an equitable distribution, according to need, of the funds available.

Some sources of income have increased but others have declined. A major direct marketing campaign is being launched to increase our number of supporters.

Legacy income in the current year was just under £700k, which is £100k short of the budgeted figure. However, the previous year the legacy income was £1,122k, which was £430k above budget. This indicates how unpredictable legacy income can be.

**Andrew Dougal OBE
Chief Executive**

A Helping Hand



250 new applicants, with a noticeable increase in younger volunteers and postgraduates applying.

This was a busy and successful year for our volunteering department, with 463 volunteers registered and over

As usual our fantastic volunteers played an essential role in helping to raise money to provide our front line services and assisting with events.

New volunteer roles were created during the year, including interns, assisting with data input, processing gift aid and helping with mail outs.

The NICHS unit at Connswater shopping centre in east Belfast, effectively run by a dedicated team of volunteers, continues to offer health assessments and provide literature.

Many of our volunteers received service awards. 34 attended a 25

year award event with the Chief Executive, Andrew Dougal and the BBC's Walter Love.

Two volunteers were recognised at the Institute of Fundraising NI Awards. Davy Boyle, Coleraine's "Caring Caretaker" won the Bryan Walliker Fundraising Volunteer of the Year Award 2013 and Dorothy Stevenson received a nomination.

The volunteering department is currently undergoing reassessment for the Investing in Volunteers Award, so watch this space.

Raymond's Story



“To this day I still remember the visit from the NICHS Stroke Family Support Co-ordinator. There is a lot I don't remember of that time but I remember her visit because for the first time things didn't seem so dark. She was like a light at the end of the tunnel.”

“She was so friendly and encouraging and she had so much information for me and my family. Now I realise that knowledge is power.

“I had wonderful care from lots of doctors and nurses

but I still felt very lonely, frightened and unsure of the future when I was in hospital and when I got home I was very low. It would have been very easy just to go under; I kept thinking why me? I had been retired for 3 years before my stroke, my wife and I had been having a wonderful time travelling, so I wasn't under any stress and it was hard to understand why I had suffered a stroke and to accept that I had one.

“Stroke affects not just the person but also their family. For me, the only real physical effect is that sometimes my balance isn't good. But my personality has been more affected. I used to be a demonstrative person but I am less so now. I can also have a quick

temper; small things that wouldn't have bothered me in the past now anger or irritate me a lot quicker. My memory has also been affected which causes me problems; I was a professional chef but I can't cook like I did before because I can't remember the recipes. These things are “invisible” to many people, but not to my family because they have to live with them and adapt to them just like I have done.

“Through my contact with NICHS I am now an active volunteer both with NICHS and with other organisations. Through my Stroke Family Support Co-ordinator I have become a volunteer as I know how invaluable contact with other stroke survivors is. I know how lonely and frightened I was back at the start. But I hope that I can show people there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

“I am passionate about helping raise people's awareness of NICHS and what they do. I received so much support from the charity but I didn't know what they did until I needed them and I think many other people are the same.”

Florence's Story

“After a couple of years of becoming more and more breathless, in August 2011 I had to go to my GP because I had a severe pain in my side. I was sent for an x-ray the next day. Two days later at the top of my stairs on my way to bed I became so breathless I thought I was going to die. I wasn't able to speak but I phoned my daughter and she recognised my number and knew something was wrong so she came round immediately. She stayed with me that night and we went back to the GP in the morning. The GP prescribed an inhaler and this has been invaluable in helping manage my breathlessness. It is certainly true that nothing else matters when you can't breathe!

“That September my GP told me I had COPD. I retired from work on medical grounds and everything in my life became a bit slower. It took me longer to do household chores, I had real trouble with my stairs at home and I was struggling with difficult emotions like frustration, anger and fear.

“In September 2012 I was in a local chemist when I saw a poster for a NICHS COPD Support Group. I rang the number to speak to the Respiratory Support Co-ordinator and am so glad I did.

“Meeting people with similar experiences to me has been wonderful. I was very quiet at the start but now I talk a lot more as my confidence has increased.

“The group were so encouraging and it helped to set goals to do things through the week. I still use the goals to get things done, breaking tasks down into smaller goals. At the minute I am sorting clothes to give to charity.

“Through NICHS I have been put in contact with a physical activity co-ordinator and I am now attending an activity class for people living with COPD. I love that I am back at the gym. It's something I have always enjoyed.



“I am so glad that I saw that poster and phoned NICHS. I feel like things have just fallen into place for me since I met my Support Group and I am sure my daughter sees a big difference in me. I just feel so much better.”

Future Care Services Model



Over the past year we have been reviewing Care Services and the groups, programmes and support that we offer. Louis Shields' story shows the model of care that we offer a person who has had a stroke, and their family or carers.

Louis's story begins: “I had my stroke in September 2012. It came on with no warning. I just felt a little bit dizzy and two or three minutes later I was semi conscious on my living room floor.

I was very fortunate to get thrombolysis quickly. The drug helps to break the clot up and improve the blood flow to the brain. This has meant that I have recovered well and now I am back to leading a very active life. I still tire easily and my wife thinks my memory is not quite back to what it used to be.

During my time in hospital I was given information on recovery but I couldn't really take it all in at the time. So, once I came home I found it really helpful talking to the NICHS Stroke Family Support Co-ordinator.”

Fiona Greene, Acting Director of Care Services explains: “The Stroke Schemes and Stroke Family Support have been established for a number of years across Northern Ireland. In recent years, we have developed a model of care that works with people every step of the way through different stages of personal recovery, with different programmes to help them reach the next level of recovery. Louis is one of first people to move through all the programmes we offer.”

Louis continues: “Firstly, I used the ‘Moving On’ service, which is a physical activity and education programme. My balance improved during the programme to the level it used to be. I learnt gentle stretching exercises which I still use, even now.

After ‘Moving On’ I started the ‘Taking Control’ Self Management Programme which gave me loads more confidence. During this time I decided to volunteer. Recently, I represented NICHS at the NI Stroke Conference. Another NICHS user and I sat on a panel to share our experiences with local health professionals. This helped them understand what it is really like for us and will help others in the future.”

Fiona says: “Louis's story helps illustrate our aim for NICHS's model of care – that we work with people every step of the way, through Family Support, Moving On and Self Management, empowering them and helping them learn to take care of themselves. That is what we want for Louis and all the other people with whom we work.”

More Demand for Homeless Service



Thanks to our supporters we can continue to deliver our life-changing Health & Homeless projects in areas of social deprivation. The economic downturn has created an even greater demand for these services, especially for our personal development sessions, which improve people's knowledge of food and nutrition.

These sessions are also a great way for hostel residents to come together and build relationships while developing an interest in improved diet and lifestyle.

Sarah Perry, our Health & Homeless Co-ordinator, says:

"NICHS's Health & Homeless Programme is invaluable. Here we engage on a one to one basis with many people, including teenagers who have just come out of care or other institutions. Often they have lost interest in themselves and their health. Hostel staff regularly give us feedback on the marked difference they see in people who attend this unique NICHS project."

We can only continue to deliver this programme because of your support and generosity.

Children's Health – A Challenge for the Future



Our Schools Health Programme continues its success in its second year, reaching 65 primary schools and after school clubs in the Belfast, South Eastern and Northern Trusts.

These workshops, focusing on smoking, exercise and healthy eating, have, to date, been delivered to extended schools only. These are schools mainly in areas of socioeconomic deprivation that receive additional funding to offer extra services which improve the life chances of the children who attend them. We provide teachers with support, offering fun and informative sessions that complement Key Stage 2 learning.

So what have some of the pupils learned?

"The main thing I learned today was that you need to have a balanced diet and to exercise to get good cholesterol."

– Girl, 9 years old

"I learned that when you smoke you can get COPD and there's no going back."

– Girl, 11 years old

The work that is being undertaken by our schools programme to encourage healthy lifestyle choices is an essential service for the prevention of chest, heart and stroke illnesses in the future and the more children we can reach, the better.

That's why we constantly work to improve our schools programme. In the new school year, we plan to launch a whole new brand for the service. There will be three levels of engagement. Level 3 will be offered only to those schools that meet the extended schools criteria.

These workshops will be delivered over a number of weeks to increase the long-term learning and understanding of the pupils, and this will hopefully help build the relationship between staff and pupils and NICHS as a charity. It will also be backed up with additional support material and opportunities to carry messages into the home, where all the decisions about food and lifestyle are made for children this age.

The Public Health and Fundraising departments have joined together to develop the Levels 1 and 2 products, aimed at schools that fall outside the extended school criteria. Level 1 will involve the development of a network of community health champions to deliver important health messages to schools and community groups. Level 2 is a schools package that can be delivered by the teachers outlining the key health messages and developing support for fundraising opportunities.

If you are interested in volunteering to be a trained community health champion, please contact our office for further details on 028 9032 0184 or mail@nichs.org.uk.

Service is in Tip-Top Health



Our health promotion work has been as successful as ever this year. We have worked with more than 50 organisations to offer advice on better lifestyles and avoiding cardiovascular illness.

Those taking part included schools, businesses, shopping centres and even MLAs, including the Health Minister!

The most popular element of the service has, as always, been the nurse-led health assessments. These are a key service, because they provide information to people who might not otherwise see their doctor.

Business employees appreciate having on-site health checks because it can be difficult to make a GP appointment at a time that suits. It also provokes a little health competition. As one person told us:

"Health assessments within the workplace get people talking about their results and encouraging each other to make healthy changes and increase activity levels".

Health assessments are also a vital prevention and early detection tool in the community.

One of our nurses recalls a woman who came along to have her blood pressure checked: "She had no symptoms and felt well but had extremely high blood pressure. I urged her to contact her GP immediately and from this she was sent to casualty and kept in for 2 days for observation."

Our health assessments at Stormont were also very successful. It was good to see MLAs setting an example of the need for a healthy lifestyle.

Child Heart Study tops Research List

This year we awarded more than £360,000 in research grants to professionals working in our hospitals and universities.

The largest grant - £172,130 – went to Professor Helen Dolk and colleagues at the University of Ulster and the Paediatric Cardiology Department at the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children, who are conducting the Northern Ireland Baby Hearts Study. It will look into risk factors and protective measures against congenital heart disease in the newborn.

£79,811 was awarded to Dr Michelle McKinley and her team at Queen's University (QUB) and the Royal Victoria Hospital for a study of the effects of vitamin D3 supplements on insulin resistance and cardiovascular risk factors

in people at a high risk of developing diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Prof Jayne Woodside at Queen's University received a grant of £64,765 for a project looking at the genetic effects of increasing the amount of fruit and vegetables in the diet.

Dr Malcolm Campbell, also at Queen's, has been awarded £26,000 for a study of whether a novel protein called intermedin, known to protect cells from damage during a heart attack, is present in the blood of patients following a stroke. This will help us understand the body's response to stroke.

Dr Ultan Power (QUB) received £18,974 for an investigation into treatment of chest infections caused by the RSV virus.

The total of all the awards was £361,680.

Stroke Programme 'Aids Mobility'



A 12-week NICHS trial of a new programme for stroke survivors suggests that it could help improve people's mobility and quality of life.

"Moving On", the Post Rehabilitation Enablement Programme run by NICHS continued the rehabilitation journey with stroke survivors following discharge from their community stroke team. Nineteen stroke survivors participated in a course of mixed physical

exercise and education classes. Those taking part underwent a range of assessments at the start of the programme and again after completion. These included assessments of functional capacity, mobility, self-efficacy, activities of daily living and quality of life. These assessments were compared with a 'control' group of seventeen stroke survivors who had not completed the programme. It showed that "Moving On" is likely to provide stroke survivors with greater functional capacity, mobility, quality of life and independence.

Currently, access for stroke survivors to a specialist group of therapists is limited. This results in a 20% decline in mobility once active rehabilitation ends. It is essential, therefore, that some other way is found to maximise the level of recovery and help stroke survivors become more mobile, increase confidence, self management and integration back into the community. NICHS services cannot provide medical treatment or clinical rehabilitation to people affected by stroke. However, we can provide timely and appropriate information and support services to help people and their families in order to improve their quality of life and wellbeing.

We hope that the "Moving On" programme will be another tool for that improvement.

'Breathalyser' Hope in Lung Disease Study

Research funded by NICHS aims to help develop a simple breathing test that could diagnose and monitor lung infections without a hospital appointment.

Helped by our £10,000 funding, Dr Bettina Schock and her team at Queen's University are examining ways of detecting the compounds that are released in the breath by bacteria growing in the lining of the airways when a person with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) develops an infection.

More than four million people die worldwide every year from respiratory infections. Lung infections in COPD lead to cumulative damage and together with other factors, such as smoking, can lead to lung cancer and

premature death. Some bacterial infections are difficult to eradicate and an early and accurate diagnosis is essential in the management of the disease. A rapid, simple, easy to operate and cost-efficient screening test that can be used to diagnose and to monitor bacterial infections would therefore benefit both patients and the Health Service.

The research team is using a technique called Surface Enhanced Raman Spectroscopy (SERS). Dr Schock and her team have successfully identified SERS as a technique that is capable of detecting compounds in exhaled breath that relate to bacterial infections associated with COPD. If a simple breathing test could be developed for use at a GP's practice or at home, it would enable quicker diagnosis and faster treatment.

Campaign will Save Lives

The success of the campaign to establish a screening service for Familial Hypercholesterolaemia means that hundreds of lives will be changed and many lives saved across Northern Ireland.

There are an estimated 3,600 people living with the condition, which causes an inherited form of heart disease. Those affected have abnormally high levels of cholesterol in their bloodstream, which causes furring or hardening of the arteries and early development of coronary heart disease.

NICHS is contributing over £35,000 to enable the setting up of a screening service, because people with FH need to be identified and treated as quickly as possible. Before the establishment of the service, only 870 people had been identified. In other words, three out of four of those affected still don't know that they have the condition. The screening service will provide a proper database for FH and testing of families in every Health Trust area.

We have been pressing for this development for some time and raised the subject at the All Party Group on Heart Disease and Stroke at the Northern



Ireland Assembly. We helped establish the All Party Group in conjunction with the British Heart Foundation and the Stroke Association to raise awareness and understanding of issues like FH.

We were very pleased that Mrs Frances Willey, whose family has been hugely affected by FH, was able to go to Stormont last November, address the All Party Group, and argue in support of FH testing. The Assembly Members were very supportive and wrote to the Health Committee and the Minister, Edwin Poots, supporting our campaign.

We are delighted that the Health & Social Care Board and the Trusts have now agreed that a Familial Hypercholesterolemia service is to be commissioned shortly. Thanks to all our efforts, Northern Ireland is at the forefront of countering this condition in the UK.

Events Round Up



Belfast City Marathon

A huge thank you to all our runners who took on the challenge of the Belfast City Marathon.

With more than 40 relay teams and 100 individuals running the full 26 miles, it was one of the largest ever teams representing NICHS.

Some were running to remember a loved one they had lost to a chest, heart or stroke illness. Others were running for somebody they knew who is living with one of these conditions every day. Check out our photos from the event at

www.facebook.com/runtorememberNICHS

Causeway Trek

Our 7th annual Causeway Trek saw more than 400 walkers turning out to trek some of Northern Ireland's most beautiful countryside.

The route began at the world famous Giant's Causeway and traversed over 10 miles of varied terrain to its finish at the clifftops of Carrick-a-rede.

This year there was an extra boost for those taking part – a bowl of Flahavan's porridge at

the starting line and a goody bag at the finish! A huge thank you to everyone who came along and helped make the day such as success, and to our sponsors, Flahavan's.

Community Round Up

Staff and Students at Ballydown Primary, Banbridge held a Fun Fitness Friday on 22nd February in which the children participated in a Zumba marathon and the staff began a 24-hour treadmill challenge. Staff took turns throughout the night and ran more than 100 miles, finishing at a packed coffee morning on 23rd February.

All in all the school raised a fantastic £1,889.24 for NICHS.

On 9th March 2013, almost 100 participants took part in the Formula Cannonball Fun Rally from Newry to Galway. The participants, all in fancy dress in an array of vintage, rally and sports cars, made their way to Galway, competing in treasure hunts along the route.

In total £4,324 was raised to support NICHS services in the Newry area.

Climb 4 Conal

Conal Baldwin, aged just 12, died suddenly on Christmas Eve 2012 from a heart related illness.

Conal was a big fan of GAA, hurling and camogie. His Facebook status said "GAA Is My Life".

Conal played Gaelic football for An Ríocht and hurling with the Mourne Club. He was the Down Féile Skills Winner in 2010, and his GAA125 project "My GAA hero, me and my dad" won first place in the Down schools competition.

Conal followed his dad Joe everywhere when he managed Down, Queen's, and Antrim Camogie teams. Teresa Mc Gowan the Rossa goalkeeper, described Conal as simply "infectious". At school, he captained the St. Marks, Warrenpoint team.

On Sunday 12th May this year the An Ríocht club in partnership with NI Chest Heart & Stroke held a "Climb 4 Conal" from Donard Park to the top of Slieve Donard in memory of 'the wee man with the shining red hair and the massive smile'. More than 500 walkers came out to commemorate Conal's life and raise funds for NICHS.

Top of the Shops!



L to R: Natalie Jackson, Fairhill's Marketing & Commercial Manager, Vanessa Elder, Fundraising Manager, NICHS, Caroline Laverty, Chairperson for Fairhill Traders' Association.

Fairhill Shopping Centre in Ballymena has selected NICHS as its charity of the year for 2013 and is planning to raise £15,000 to support our work.

Natalie Jackson, Fairhill Marketing and Commercial Manager, said: "We are delighted to support the work of NI Chest Heart & Stroke. Money raised will help the local services of the charity supporting people with respiratory illness, stroke and heart disease. We'll also be offering our customers health checks and lifestyle advice once a month with the help of NICHS nurses."

This partnership will be fundraising to support NI Chest Heart & Stroke's services in the Ballymena and Antrim area, including the Stroke Family Support Service, Respiratory Support Groups and the Stroke Schemes.

Fairhill is raising funds with collections, sponsored abseils and a variety of in-

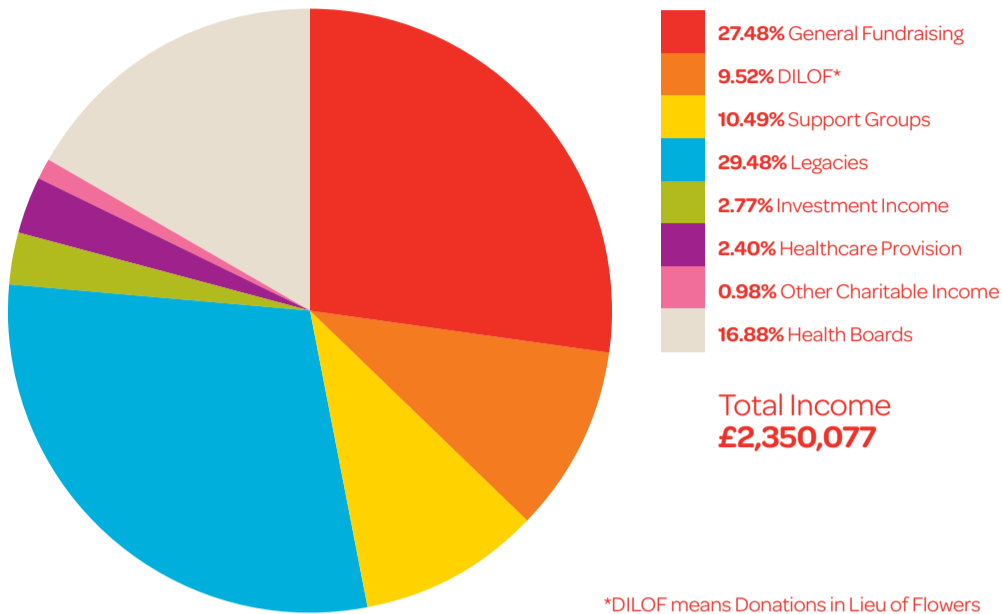


store activities. In January 2013 shoppers guessed the numbers of balloons for the chance to win £50 of shopping vouchers. Jenny Bristow also showed her support, helping with Fairhill's 'Cook-Off Challenge' in February, when shoppers competed for the title of Ballymena's best cook. The event also provided a great opportunity for healthy eating tips.

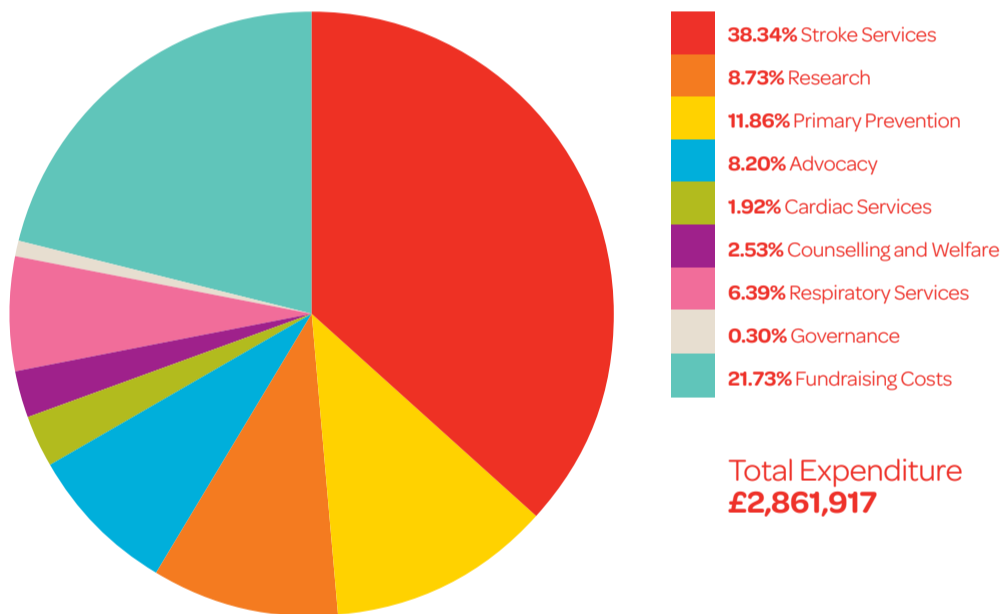
For more information about charity partnerships with NI Chest Heart & Stroke, please contact Vanessa Elder, Fundraising Manager on velder@nichs.org.uk

Our Accounts 2012-13

Where our money comes from



Where our money goes



Join us on Facebook and Twitter



Mention us to your friends – the more followers we have, the more we can spread the message about our work to combat chest, heart and stroke illnesses. Find us on Facebook, too. We're at www.facebook.com/Belfast.NICHs.

If you have a Twitter account, you can now follow us @nichstweet or find our page at www.twitter.com/nichstweet. It's the best place for up-to-date snippets of information about what we're doing, as well as links to research and other interesting material from Northern Ireland and around the world.

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 University of Oxford

Dr Lorcan McGarvey,
 Queen's University Belfast

Dr Chin-Kuo Chang,
 King's College London

Prof Philip Reilly,
 Queen's University Belfast

Prof Robert Welch,
 University of Ulster

Dr Annie Britton,
 University College London

Dr Michael McCormick,
 Craigavon Area Hospital

Prof Michael Shields,
 Queen's University Belfast and
 Royal Victoria Hospital

Dr Mark Harbinson,
 Belfast Health & Social Care Trust
 and Queen's University Belfast

Professor Cathy Craig,
 Queen's University Belfast

Looking for a new running challenge? Look no further.

Run to Remember, Benone – 14th September

Join us in September for NICHHS' first ever 10km or 5km beach run on the north coast's beautiful Benone Strand. This will be a tough but fabulous challenge, professionally organised by 26 Extreme and will include full Champion Chip timing, water stations and medals for all finishers!

Run to Remember is about taking on a personal challenge in support of the 200,000 people living in Northern Ireland with a chest, heart or stroke illness.

You may wish to Run to Remember for someone you've lost to one of these devastating illnesses, or to run for someone in your family who is living with a health condition.

Benone is just the start...

You can also Run to Remember for NICHHS at any event across UK or Ireland or even further afield. We're here to support you every step of the way with motivation when the training gets tough and tips on how best to raise sponsorship.

Whether it's your first or your fifteenth marathon, we'll be with you every step of the way. Here are a few of our top events for 2013:

Run to Remember, Benone 10k/5k
Saturday 14th September 2013

Belfast City Half Marathon
Sunday 22nd September 2013

Causeway Coast Marathon
Saturday 28th September 2013

Dublin Marathon
Monday 28th October 2013

New York Marathon
(contact us for a guaranteed entry)
Sunday 3rd November 2013

To sign up for one of these events, or another of your choice, simply visit www.nichs.org.uk/runtoremember



Mighty Oaks from Little Acorns Grow



Living Oak Fund as a special way for you to celebrate and pay tribute to the life of your loved one. As well as keeping their memory alive, you will be raising money to help other people in Northern Ireland suffering from a heart condition, stroke or respiratory disease.

Maudie Boyle, mum of Gareth Boyle, who died of a heart attack aged just 31, shares with us why his family has set up a Living Oak Fund.

"Gareth loved life and everyone loved him. We've set up a Living Oak Fund for Gareth partly because it keeps his memory alive but also because if we can help to save just one life, it will do justice to the wonderful young man he was."

When a loved one dies, the feeling of loss is often overwhelming. We remember the things we loved about them and celebrate the joy they brought into our lives. Sometimes we feel we need to do something positive in their memory, especially if a loved one died before their time. That's why we've created the NICHHS



William Walker, a young farmer from Islandmore, was just 25 years old when he collapsed and died from a heart condition on his way to the Balmoral Show with friends in May 2011. He had been waiting for a heart operation. Priscilla Walker, William's mum, his dad Stephen and sister Claire told us:

"We wanted to raise funds for NICHHS in William's memory because of the heart condition he lived with. It also helps keep us focused organising events and we feel it keeps us closer to him."

It's easy to set up a Living Oak Fund in memory of your loved one.

Simply contact our Donor Care Team on 028 9032 0184 or email us at goneill@nichs.org.uk.

You can visit livingoakfunds.nichs.org.uk to set up your personal tribute page online or download a Living Oak Fund leaflet from www.nichs.org.uk/livingoakfunds.

Email is one of the most cost effective ways for NICHHS to keep in touch. To ensure our funds go where they are needed most we would like to send you our Annual 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 sign up online at www.nichs.org.uk

Email Address*

Please return this slip to:
NICHHS, Freepost, Licence No BE503,
Belfast, BT2 7BR.

*In providing my email address I am happy to receive emails from NICHHS.

Contact

Belfast Office

Northern Ireland Chest,
Heart & Stroke
21 Dublin Road
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