

Latest NICHHS news

Get into gardening

**Top tips for
reducing stress**

**Recipes, craft
& puzzles**



FROM THE HEART

Spring 2023

Chest
Heart &
Stroke

Hello and welcome to our spring edition of From the Heart.

The last time we spoke, winter was upon us with darker days, colder snaps, and bleaker landscapes. Now, we graciously invite spring to brighten the evenings, add a flourish to our garden beds, and radiate the warmth of the sun. It is fair to say, for many, the prospect of spring, encourages a leap in one's step, and with the changing seasons comes new beginnings.

In this edition of From the Heart we explore the different opportunities spring can offer. From taking care of your garden, to some spring appropriate culinary delights in our recipe section and creating your own herb pots. This edition will surely spark a Monty Don in us all! We also have updates on the latest goings on at NICHHS, showcase some of our wonderful volunteers and, as April was Stress Awareness month, look at ways to help reduce stress levels.

We hope you enjoy our spring magazine. Until we meet again, take care.

Care Services Team

Northern Ireland Chest Heart and Stroke

NICHHS News

New Members Of The NICHHS Team



Hello,
my name is **Darren French**
and I joined NICHHS in January.

I am a Care Services Co-ordinator and I cover the Northern Trust Region. Before joining NICHHS I worked in Community Mental Health for the Northern Trust.

Away from work, and to relax, I enjoy:

- Films - Heat (Al Pacino and Robert De Niro in the best bank heist film ever made), Gladiator (epic), Jaws (I really was scared to go back into the water after this), Alien and Aliens (Sigourney Weaver was excellent in these).
- Music - Anything from the 1980's (Roxy Music, ABC, The Cure, anything by David Bowie), Soul (anything Motown) and I love listening to Jazz FM.
- Hobbies - Gardening, coastal walks, camping and visiting National Trust properties.



Hello,
my name is **Paul Hendry**
and I joined the NICHS team
at the start of the year.

I am a Care Services Co-ordinator in the Belfast and South Eastern Trust area. I previously worked with Macmillan supporting people with a cancer diagnosis as well as their families and/or carers.

My interests include:

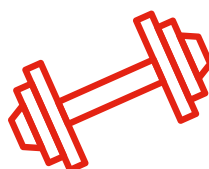
- I enjoy the gym and go 4 times a week.
- I'm a big Liverpool supporter (not something to shout about at the minute!).
- I love music and go to a lot of concerts. My favourite bands are Kings of Leon, The Killers, and the Stereophonics. I also like Dermott Kennedy at the moment.

Hello,
my name is **Aidan Hamilton**
and I started working at
NICHS in January.

I am a Care Services Co-ordinator in the Belfast and South Eastern Trust area.

My hobbies include:

- Weight training. An interesting fact about me is I am the current Northern Ireland Men's Physique bodybuilding champion.
- Hikes in the Belfast hills.
- I am a great lover of music and would listen to anything from classical to rap and everything in between.



Chest
Heart &
Stroke

Red Dress Fun Run 2023

In February we were delighted to hold our biggest Red Dress Fun Run to date. Almost 1,000 people gathered at Stormont Estate for the five-kilometre run or walk event which helps raise funds for our care and prevention services and research. Holding the event in February also supports us in raising awareness of heart disease as this is Heart Month. Eric McMaster, who attends one of our PREP groups, and Lauren Mann, one of our Care Services Co-Ordinators, were some of the many who took part in the event.

Eric

Eric, his daughter Karen (and her dog!), and Karen's friend Lisa took on the Red Dress Fun Run in loving memory of Lisa's father.

Eric is 77 years old and had a stroke in December 2022. Eric is currently attending our Post Rehabilitation Education Programme in Newtownards to aid his recovery post stroke.

Eric has added his Red Dress Fun Run medal to his very impressive competitive running medal collection. Eric first started running in 1962 with the Church Lads Brigade and it was not long before Eric was bringing home gold. Eric won many titles over the years, including running for Ireland. Eric also competed in marathons in the 1980s and completed the Bolton, Belfast, Dublin, Antrim Coast Road, and London marathons.

Eric has always led a very active lifestyle, playing golf, football, climbing the Mourne regularly and completing the 874-mile Lands End to John O'Groats virtual challenge during lockdown over a 4-month period. Eric has kept up his walking after the Red Dress Fun Run and frequently walks the grounds of Stormont. Well done and thank you Eric!



Lauren

Hello, my name is Lauren, and I am a NICHS Care Services Co-ordinator in the Belfast and South Eastern trust.

My family and friends joined me in taking part in the Red Dress Fun Run 2023 in loving memory of my father John Mann, who we sadly lost in 2014 from a heart attack.

The sun was shining, and the atmosphere was amazing. The sea of red took over Stormont and it was the most enjoyable 5k run I have taken part in.

It was great to see so many people getting involved- adults, teenagers, children, and dogs all out in force running and walking to support NICHS.

It was a fantastic day and I look forward to the 2024 event!

We Won Gold!

We are so proud to have recently been awarded We Invest in People Gold accreditation from Investors in People. This award is confirmation of our success in building an organisation where people trust one another, share challenges, support each other, and are dedicated and passionate about delivering high quality services.

Staff were consulted as part of the assessment process and their feedback showed they are all proud of what they do and believe that they really make a difference to the lives of our service users. Our staff have adapted to challenges, particularly over the last few years, changing how they worked, where they worked and what they prioritised, both personally and professionally.

Everyone was asked for a word that summed up what working at NICHS feels like. The most frequent responses were: 'supportive,' 'caring,' 'rewarding,' 'fulfilling,' 'privileged' and 'enjoyable'.

This accreditation is a fantastic achievement as only 17% of organisations achieve gold. While we are thrilled to have reached this milestone, our efforts don't stop here! We will continue to work hard to improve the quality of the services we provide, and to move forward in how we manage, develop and lead to make NICHS the best it can be.



Caoimhe Devlin, Head of HR, and Declan Cunnane, Chief Executive.

Blood Pressure Campaign

A promotional banner for the Blood Pressure Campaign. The background is dark with a medical monitor showing vital signs (ECG, RESP, BLEM) and a person's face in the foreground. The text reads: 'HIS NUMBER'S UP. 1 in 2 heart attacks & strokes are linked to high blood pressure. Check your blood pressure to know your numbers. VISIT NICHS.ORG.UK'. There is a 'Chest Heart & Stroke' logo and 'Supported by MACE' in the bottom right corner.

You may remember our blood pressure campaign from last year and we are glad to have the opportunity to run this again.

Unfortunately, the fact remains that 1 in 2 heart attacks and strokes are linked to high blood pressure and many people are living with undetected high blood pressure. It is therefore vital we once again spread the message about the importance of getting your blood pressure checked so you know your blood pressure numbers and, in turn, can take action to reduce your risk of a serious health event by seeking treatment where necessary.

A blood pressure check is simple and only takes a few minutes, but it really could help save your life.

For further information about the campaign, including dates of free pop-up blood pressure checks at selected MACE stores, visit nichs.org.uk/highbloodpressure

Chest
Heart &
Stroke

Get Gardening

Gardening is a hobby enjoyed by many people, particularly during the spring months. Here Emma, one of our Stroke Care Services Co-Ordinators, shares what gardening means to her and her family. Emma lives in Armagh at the foot of Slieve Gullion and comes from a long line of gardening enthusiasts:

“For me, springtime is a very exciting time of year. New life in the ground is evident, especially when you see the snowdrops and daffodils bloom from hibernation. Gardening has been ingrained in my family for generations. When my grandparents were younger, families grew their own fruit and vegetables. They were self-sufficient, their knowledge and methods were invaluable, and we are incredibly lucky my grandfather passed a lot of this on to us.”

“My Grandad came from a vegetable plantation and livestock farming background. He did this for many years, but as he got older he was physically unable to carry on and decided to dedicate his time and efforts to his garden instead.”



“One of my favourite things in my grandfather’s garden was the stunning hydrangeas, a mixture of deep purples and blues. It is such an eye-catching plant and makes an elegant floral arrangement in summer. I have been told that burying pennies in the soil alongside your hydrangea can change the colour of its blossom due to the levels of aluminium. I’m not sure if this is gardening folklore or a smart way to save money!”



“We sadly no longer have Grandad to seek guidance from, however we have restored the greenhouse and are ready to keep the gardening tradition alive. Overseen by my Grandad’s gardening cap which still hangs in pride of place, and supervised by the boss woman, Nanny.”



Easy Indoor And Outdoor Planting Ideas

You might think gardening isn't for you because of a health condition, your age, or a lack of outdoor space but there is a Monty Don in us all! Here are some examples of vegetables which can be easily planted and looked after:

- **Potatoes** - Great in a summer salad, or baking on a BBQ, potatoes are always a firm favourite. There are several types of potatoes including the early range and maincrop. If space is an issue, the best type of potato to plant is the early range. Ideally planted in spring and harvested in summer, potatoes should be planted outdoors in trenches, regularly watered, and need plenty of sunlight to grow. Some people swear by talking to their potatoes to speed up the growth process!
- **Scallions** - Also known as spring onions, scallions are very young onions which are harvested before the bulb has a chance to swell. Scallions can be grown indoors and are perennial which means their roots are long lasting and the vegetable can be harvested continuously without having to be replanted.
- **Radishes** - A radish is another vegetable which can be grown indoors. Preferably planted in early spring this vegetable does not require a lot of room due to its shallow roots, making it an easy plant to look after indoors.

The Benefits Of Gardening

When people think about keeping fit and healthy, they might think about gym memberships, intense walks, and strenuous workouts. Gardening however is not just a great source of nutritious food, it also offers great physical and emotional benefits regardless of age, ability, and physical strength:

Exercise for the mind - a number of studies have shown that gardening can help to reduce depression and anxiety as well as improve our social functioning. It can also help to maintain levels of independence and prevent cognitive decline as well as improve sleep patterns which is needed after all that hard work!

Heart health - gardening is a physical activity which helps build endurance and increases stamina, promoting good heart health which can decrease your risk of stroke and heart attack. Growing your own produce also provides fresh fruit and vegetables helping you eat a healthier diet.

From our heads to our toes - sometimes falls can happen and for some, venturing outside can be unsettling. Light gardening however, has been noted to benefit balance and flexibility, in turn helping to prevent falls and trips.

A helping hand - for anyone who has suffered a stroke, weakness, or limited movement in one or both arms and hands can occur, and for some, the idea of gardening may seem unrealistic. Gardening activities such as weeding using a hand trowel or watering can help to increase strength in the arms and hands, improving power and flexibility.

Gardening For Everyone

Gardening is an inclusive activity which can be adapted to suit individual needs. There are a number of things we can do to ensure our gardens are fit for the Chelsea Flower Show without too much effort!

- **Raised garden beds** - these can make gardening more accessible, minimising the need for bending, kneeling, and stooping.
- **Planting pots** - planting in containers and pots requires less maintenance compared to vegetation in the ground and saves on space! If you suffer from fatigue and tiredness planting pots are a great way to save your energy levels.
- **Herb kits** - 'grow your own' herb kits are a fantastic way to start your gardening career. Kits will include seeds and pots which you can easily set up in your kitchen in a well-lit area and watch your herbs grow over time.



NICHS Volunteer Profiles

My name is Audrey Keenan and I come from the Ards Peninsula. I volunteer at the Newtownards PREP group which takes place on a Monday afternoon, and I absolutely love it. I had my own stroke back in 2017 and it was through attending the group I found out about volunteering for NICHS and now I am giving something back for the help I received.

My passion is in flowers and over the years I have completed a few floral courses and achieved my certifications. A few years ago, a new florist's opened in my local village of Kircubbin called Rose & Wildflower. I called in one day and to my surprise it was owned by a lady I knew from work about 20 years ago!

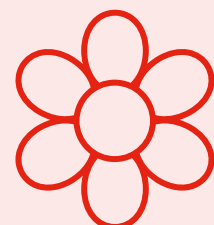
The owner knew my work and how much I enjoyed floristry and around 2 years ago she asked if I would like to come on board with her. After explaining I was not working anymore due to health reasons she asked if I would consider doing volunteer work for her and I jumped at the chance. I do one day a week which lets me enjoy my passion and also gets me out into the community. I have met so many lovely people through this. One retired gentleman calls in for a chat the day I am in the shop- he says it encourages him out of the house because someone is taking time to speak to him.

**“
My 'pay' for
volunteering is
flowers on tap
every week which
I thoroughly love -
who could ask
for more?!**



I hope to continue doing this for as long as possible.

I have shared a couple of photos of my recent work for orders for Mother's Day.



My name is Fionna Henry, I am a NICHs service user and volunteer. I am not unique or remarkable, considering what some people went through during the awful pandemic we experienced. This is just my story. I have told my story many times, the first being in 2019 at the launch of the Breathing Better programme in Omagh. I have been included in a NICHs brochure, have spoken to the newspapers and a couple of pulmonary rehab classes and I'm delighted to be able to share some of my story here in From the Heart, in the hope that it will encourage you to sign up to be a volunteer too.



I'm very open about what I suffer from, in the hope I can help others. I have COPD, sleep apnoea, arthritis and about 12 years ago I had a mild stroke. As most of you probably know COPD cannot be cured but it certainly can be managed. That can be said about the sleep apnoea too.

I first came into contact with NICHs in 2018, after the completion of the NHS pulmonary rehabilitation programme, where I huffed and puffed my way through the exercise programme and struggled with my arthritic knees. I did enjoy the classes, but sometimes it really was an effort. If I hadn't met Linzi (Care Services Co-ordinator) that day I would have walked away unaware of the benefits I could achieve. Someone once said to me, "you don't look sick" - that's a good thing. But in order to prevent the hidden illnesses coming to the surface, that requires work and effort, and I need all the help I can get, so NICHs programmes absolutely fit the bill.

In September 2018, I participated in the NICHs Taking Control programme, and found it to be so beneficial, and enjoyable. After completing the programme, I felt that I could manage my conditions better than I had in the past. The programme taught me to turn "I can't" into "I can". This is a powerful realisation. Taking Control has given me the courage and confidence to be myself. You get as much out of the programme as you wish to take, there's no limitation to what you can achieve, but it's not a miracle cure. When I was asked if I would like to train to co-

deliver Taking Control as a volunteer, I jumped at the opportunity. I have co-delivered it once in Rouskey- then the pandemic hit. We all had to adapt to using Zoom, and I have delivered Taking Control twice on Zoom. If I can help one person with what I have said, I would be satisfied.

In 2022 I was asked if I wanted to volunteer at a Post Rehab Exercise Programme (PREP) group. I absolutely love this. You meet such a diversity of people. It can be very challenging, but at the same time it can be very rewarding.

I also participate in a monthly NICHs respiratory exercise group in Omagh. It's such good fun. Not only am I getting exercise, but I get tremendous friendship from the group. Every day I try to challenge myself and do a bit more than the day before. Sometimes it is not easy but I do try. I'm always endeavouring to learn more, do more and be as active as I can manage on that day. I am a work in progress, on a lifelong journey, but I'm trying, and with the help and support of NICHs, I hope to be around for some time yet.

As a volunteer, I give my time willingly, and I am in a position to talk freely about my experiences. I have a t-shirt, which I wear with pride. It's very easy to speak with passion about something you believe in. I will gladly speak on this subject to anyone who will listen and even those who don't want to listen!

In keeping with this edition's theme of spring I can tell you that what I like most about spring is daffodils! They radiate sunshine, and really gladden the heart. When they start to come out in the spring the world feels a much brighter place. I would rather have daffodils than roses, any day!

So maybe I'll meet you on some of these lovely spring days, wearing your new red t-shirt proudly when you've signed up as a volunteer!

If you are interested in volunteering with us, please speak to your Care Services Co-Ordinator, or visit nichs.org.uk/how-you-can-help/volunteering to view our current volunteer opportunities.

**Chest
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Stress Awareness Month

Top Tips For Reducing Stress

The last few years have been some of the most challenging of our lifetimes due to COVID-19. Fear, grief, forced isolation, home schooling, working from home, illness, loneliness, and a lack of social engagements resulted in heightened levels of stress. As a result, looking after our emotional wellbeing as well as our physical health has become a major talking point and a real priority for many people.

Stress can have an adverse effect on our bodies by increasing heart rate and blood pressure which is a risk factor for stroke and heart disease. Stress can create feelings of nausea and panic, muscle pain and tension headaches. It can also have a negative impact on mood and has been linked to depression. April was Stress Awareness month, and we want to encourage and support you in trying to reduce your stress levels. There are lots of things you can try to help you manage stress in a more positive way:



1. Try to identify the causes of stress in your life as this can be one of the most effective ways of tackling the issues. Write down what it is that is causing a negative impact in your life- understanding these stressors can be the best way to learn how to cope with or avoid them.



2. Getting back to nature can help by giving our bodies a natural boost. A walk in the park or forest will increase the release of endorphins which are hormones that help give us that 'feel good' factor. If walking is difficult or your motivation is low, grab a book or a newspaper and take a seat on a park bench instead – the key to this one is being amongst the trees!

Oxygen levels in forested areas are usually high as trees absorb carbon dioxide and produce oxygen, but did you know that trees also produce phytocides and terpenes? These substances have proven beneficial effects. When they are inhaled our natural disease fighting cells have been shown to increase in number – a win for the adage, "prevention is better than cure." Exposure to phytocides has also been shown to have a natural anti-inflammatory effect across the body, they help reduce stress and anxiety and improve mood! So, there's no better reason to get out amongst the trees and breathe deeply!



3. Breathe! In times of stress we tend to take quicker, more shallow breaths and this adds to that feeling of panic, pain etc. Stop. Many breathing techniques exist and for good reason – they work! Practice inhaling deeply for a count of 3, hold for 3 and then breathe out for 3. When you have mastered this, you can increase to a count of 4. Really think about what you are doing and feel the breath enter and exit the body. You should start to feel more relaxed and less tense. This can help clear the mind and aid more rational thinking.



4. Try the 5,4,3,2,1 technique which will encourage you to engage and occupy all your senses. It takes practice but will bring your focus away from the stressor and into the present moment. Wherever you are (safely!) take a minute to yourself. Look around you and identify 5 things that you can see; listen and pick out 4 things that you can hear; identify 3 things that you can feel; what 2 smells can you sniff out?; and what taste is in your mouth?



5. What about planning some time for rest? Give yourself permission to take 30 minutes to relax and just enjoy time for you. Take a bath, add some essential oils or salts to enhance the experience. Put your feet up and listen to the quiet or put music on and sing along at the top of your voice – you'll be amazed at how good this feels, it's a great way of distracting yourself from your worries. Watch a movie, get nostalgic and find a childhood favourite or something you have been meaning to watch.



6. Get a change of scenery. Go for a drive to a local beauty spot, park up and watch the world go by. All those things you need to do will be there when you get back.

Whatever you do make sure it's something you enjoy. Making some small changes to your life and really investing in 'you' will bring big gains in terms of reducing your stress levels and becoming healthier and happier.

You can find more information and some useful stress management videos on our website at nichs.org.uk/information/risk-factors/stress

**Chest
Heart &
Stroke**

How NICHS Funded Research Is Improving The Health Of Northern Ireland



Investing in high-quality, ground-breaking local research is at the heart of our charity. Since the first grant in 1958 (£35 to Dr Knox to research Chronic Bronchitis), we have devoted ourselves to funding treatments, medications, therapies, rehabilitation programmes and cures.

We have invested almost £8 million into research in local universities and hospitals since 1994, which has advanced the prevention, treatment and care of chest, heart and stroke conditions within Northern Ireland. Fidelma Carter, Head of Public Health at NICHS explains; “A key priority for us is ensuring fewer people develop chest, heart and stroke related illnesses and that more people than ever survive them with an enhanced quality of life and greater independence. Research is vital to this.”

“Over the past 29 years we have supported local research by investing millions of pounds and funding a total of 117 projects. We currently have 19 projects live, with a total of £1,657,000 invested in research, all funded through the kind donations received from the public, partners and donors, for which we are extremely grateful.”

“One exciting research project is looking at a potential new test for Atrial Fibrillation. Atrial Fibrillation, or AF, is a heart condition that causes an irregular and often abnormally fast heart rate. Over 39,000 people in Northern Ireland are living with AF and a further 10,000 may be undiagnosed^{1 2}. AF can increase a person’s stroke risk by up to five times if untreated and the stroke is more likely to be severe.”

Fidelma continues; “A team from Queen’s University Belfast are looking for new blood-based biomarkers to help detect AF. Risk for AF

is currently determined based on various clinical and lifestyle risk factors, such as age, sex and underlying vascular conditions. However, not all people with AF will have these risk factors. There are proteins in the blood that can be used to detect heart damage, but these are not specific to AF. AF can be quite a ‘silent’ condition so the team are aiming to develop a test that can be used routinely to measure subtle changes in the blood before patients become very symptomatic of AF. In people already diagnosed with AF, they want to see if there are biomarkers in their blood which indicate if they are at an increased risk of a future stroke or heart failure.”

“Knowing about and being able to test for these new biomarkers could facilitate earlier AF diagnosis and intervention with treatment plans by clinicians. For people with AF, easier routine monitoring could help reduce their risk of having a stroke which is important as an AF related stroke has very poor outcomes. Overall, the findings from this research could really help improve patient prognosis and quality of life, so we are excited to see how this project develops.”

Every year, we invite researchers from local universities and hospitals to apply to our Scientific Research Grants programme. In 2022 the Scientific Research Grants programme attracted such incredible applications the decision was made to increase the NICHS research funding budget by 63%, from £400,000 to £638,522. This year’s applications have been reviewed and we look forward to announcing some exciting new research projects soon.

You can find out more about our research projects at nichs.org.uk/research

References

¹ Disease Prevalence (Quality Outcomes Framework) (administrative geographies) <https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/ViewDataSet.aspx?ds=9882&lh=73&yn=2007-2019&sk=134&sn=Health%20and%20Social%20Care&yearfilter>

² Focus on Atrial Fibrillation in Northern Ireland. An independent AF Inquiry into the identification and management of AF to reduce stroke risk - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY. (NICHS 2020)

Be Sugar Savvy

Easter was the perfect time to enjoy a few sweet treats but many of us will have overindulged.

It is recommended that adults have no more than 30g of sugar per day. This does not include the sugar found naturally in fruit and milk. It is important to note that this is not a goal, but rather a maximum amount and we should aim to consume less than 30g.

Too much sugar, too often can have substantial effects on our health. High sugar consumption can lead to obesity, increased risk of heart disease, has been linked with some cancers and the development of type 2 diabetes. Sugar is also the main cause of tooth decay.

Tops Tips For Reducing Our Sugar Intake

1. Ensure you are eating healthy, well-balanced meals throughout the day. This will help keep you full and satisfied and less likely to reach for the sweet treats.
2. Consider your portion size when choosing a treat.
3. Look for reduced sugar versions of your favourite treats.
4. If using jams or marmalades, spread only a thin layer.
5. Use sweeteners instead of sugar in hot beverages.
6. All products list their sugar content on their packaging- compare products to find the lowest sugar content.

It's not just the obvious sweet treats we need to think about when considering our sugar intake. Some of our cupboard staples like soups, sauces and cereals are full of hidden sugars. The images below show how much sugar can be in products which might surprise you:

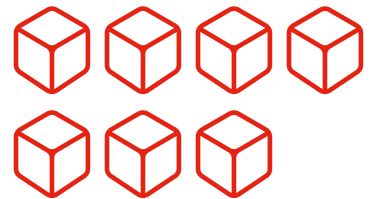
30g
= 7 sugar cubes



4



7



3.5

Per 112.5g



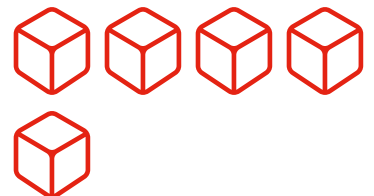
2

Per Spread



5

Per 4
Jelly
Babies



Chest
Heart &
Stroke

A Spring Harvest For The Senses



Rosemary and Sultana Loaf Cake

Ingredients

- 175g caster sugar
- 2 sprigs fresh rosemary, finely chopped
- 200g unsalted butter
- Zest and juice of one lemon
- 4 eggs
- 300g self raising flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 100g sultanas

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 170°C / gas mark 3.
2. Stir the rosemary into the caster sugar, then cream the butter and sugar.
3. Add the lemon zest to your mixture, followed by the eggs, one at a time.
4. Sift together the flour and baking powder. Add to the mixture and stir to combine.
5. Finally stir in the lemon juice and sultanas. Tip the batter into a lined, greased tin and bake in the oven for 1 hour or until a skewer comes out clean.
6. Allow to cool on a wire rack before removing from the tin.



Baby Potatoes, Roasted Radish and Cod Traybake

Ingredients

- 750g baby potatoes
- 2 ½ tbsp olive oil
- 150g radishes, trimmed and halved
- 250g asparagus, ends trimmed and chopped
- 1 lemon sliced into wedges
- 2 tbsp capers, drained
- 100g fresh or frozen peas
- 4 chunky cod fillets
- Chopped parsley



Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C / gas mark 6.
2. In a large roasting tin toss the potatoes in 2 tbsp oil. Cook in the oven for 30 minutes or until beginning to crisp up.
3. Remove potatoes from the oven and add the radishes, asparagus and lemon wedges. Mix and return to the oven for 10 minutes.
4. Remove the tray from the oven again, sprinkle over the capers and peas and lay the cod fillets on top. Brush the cod fillets with the remaining ½ tbsp oil, cook for 15 minutes until the fish is cooked and the potatoes are golden. Sprinkle over the chopped parsley and serve.

Carrot and Coriander Soup

Ingredients

- 25g butter
- 1 onion, chopped
- 500g carrots, sliced
- 225g potatoes, sliced
- 1.5 litres vegetable or chicken stock
- 1 large bunch fresh coriander, stocks removed, leaves chopped
- 1 tsp lime juice
- Salt and pepper

Method

1. Melt the butter in a large saucepan. Add the onions, cover and sweat over a medium heat until soft. Add the carrots and potatoes, cover and continue to cook for a further 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. Add the stock, salt and pepper and bring to the boil. Cover and simmer for about 15 minutes, or until the vegetables are soft.
3. Blend the soup until smooth. Pour back into the saucepan and add the coriander, lime juice and more stock if you think the soup is too thick.
4. Reheat gently, check the seasoning and serve with wheaten bread.



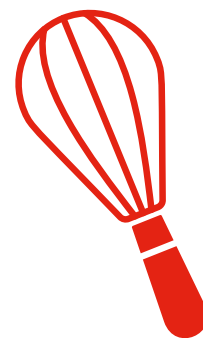
Wheaten Bread

Ingredients

- 400g wheaten meal flour
- 200g soda bread flour
- 75g caster sugar
- 2-3 pinches salt
- 3 level teaspoons baking soda
- 100g margarine
- 1 egg
- 1pt buttermilk (approx.)

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 160°C-170°C.
2. Mix all the dry ingredients and rub in margarine.
3. Add the egg and enough buttermilk to make a soft but manageable dough.
4. Knead well on a floured surface and flatten into a large round. Mark a cross on top.
5. Place on a greased baking sheet and bake in the oven for 40-50 minutes.
6. Cool on a cooling rack and serve when cold.



Chest
Heart &
Stroke

Creative Craft

DIY Indoor Herb Boxes

Here Kyle, one of our Care Services Co-Ordinators, shares how to make your own indoor herb box.

Kyle says:

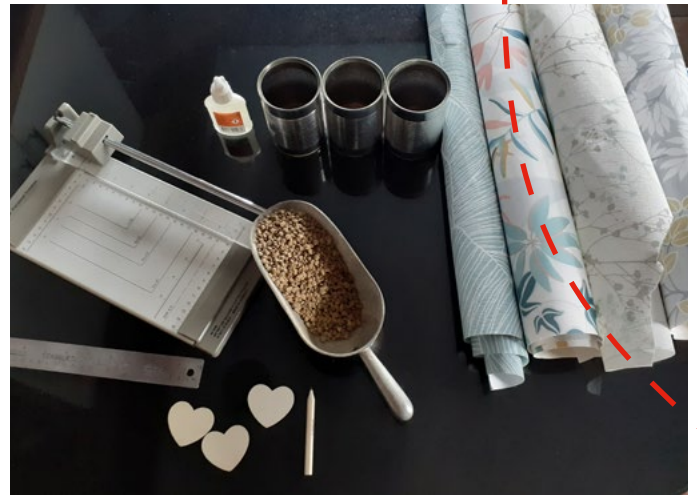
"I decided I was going to make herb boxes from recycled containers for my Mum as part of her Mother's Day present. My Mum loves cooking from fresh and adds herbs and spices to all her recipes, so this was going to be the perfect gift for Mother's Day!"

"After a few days of exploring and consulting with my two youngest daughters we decided to recycle baked bean cans to make the stylish pots for Nanny's favourite herbs."

"Our first point of call was a rummage in my eldest daughter's GCSE art box for inspiration, then a trip to the local DIY shop for wallpaper samples (free of charge!). We picked colours that matched Nanny's colour scheme but also incorporated colours for spring and Easter. With the cans, tools, and wallpaper samples at the ready we were ready to start the project."

You will need:

- Empty tin cans, washed, dried and labels removed
- Glue
- Ruler
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Labels e.g., wooden hearts
- Potting soil
- Horticultural grit or pea gravel for drainage
- Herb seeds of your choice, or you can purchase plants that are already in leaf from the supermarket e.g., basil



Method:



1

Measure the cans and cut the wallpaper to size.



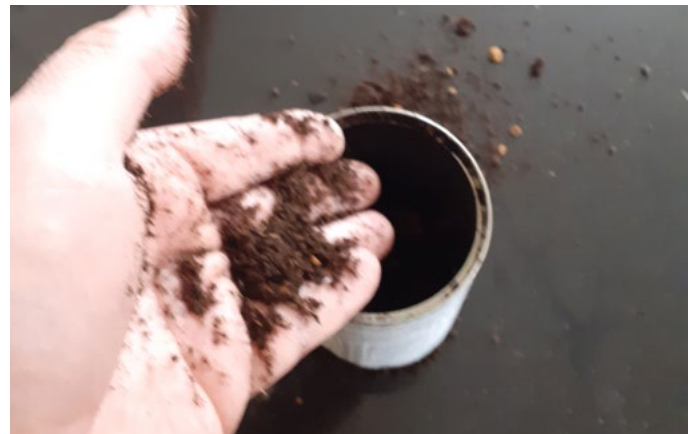
2

Add glue above and below both lips of the can then carefully fit the paper around the can, holding it in place with a clothes peg at the seam. Next, add a label e.g., a wooden heart.



3

Once the glue is dry, fill the can with approximately 1 inch of horticultural grit for drainage. If using an already in leaf plant, add a handful of potting soil, place the plant in the soil and pack down.



If using seeds, fill the can with soil, make some small holes using the top of a pencil and plant the seeds. Cover with soil- check your seed packet for specific amounts- water so the soil is damp but not waterlogged and place in the sunniest window spot and watch them grow!

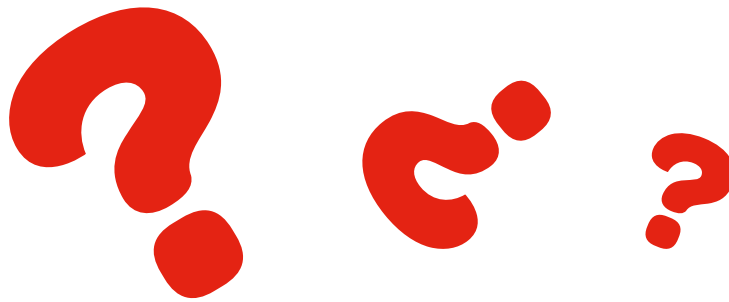


Kyle concludes, "This was a very easy and enjoyable project. Most importantly my Mum loved her Mother's Day present from the girls and is enjoying using the herbs in her cooking."

**Chest
Heart &
Stroke**

Puzzles

Word Search



O I F A A P R D C H I C K S
H Y A M C I I N B L C A A I
D H C R A M F C I B P B E I
O S D E E S L D N R L E U I
G A R D E N O A I I H B S D
H A T C H F W L G M C A L F
B I O D F Y E C R B I R D S
L Y E A N E R L O S B M A L
O S D N B R S H W R M I U U
S O U R S N E N I H S N U S
S B R C A T E R P I L L A R
O U E U H N A T U R E M C L
M L D M O O L B A I I L C S
G B N E S T U L I P S B U I

CATERPILLAR
PICNIC
FLOWERS
HATCH
DAFFODIL
SUNSHINE
BULB
BUNNY

NATURE
CALF
BLOOM
TULIPS
NEST
BIRDS
GARDEN
GROW

CHICKS
MAY
SEEDS
LAMBS
BUD
MARCH
APRIL
BLOSSOM



Stay Strong Walking Groups



Our Stay Strong Walking Groups are back for spring! The groups are open to anyone with a heart condition and are designed to increase confidence to exercise. We recognise that for many people post diagnosis regular exercise may be daunting, especially if it is not part of your everyday life.

Within the groups each participant walks at their own pace and we are confident that you will be surprised at how quickly you will make progress with our support. Our groups are delivered over a minimum of 6 weeks and are open to anyone with a cardiac condition.

Groups are taking place at:

- **Ward Park, Bangor, Fridays** – commenced 10th March.
- **Wallace Park, Lisburn, Tuesdays** – started 18th April.
- **Warrenpoint, opposite the Whistledown Hotel, Thursdays** – commenced 20th April.



If you interested in joining one of our walking groups or want to find out more about our cardiac support services, please email heartsupportni@nichs.org.uk or call **028 90320184**.

Chest
Heart &
Stroke



Almost 90% of our care and prevention services and research are funded exclusively by public donations.

Find out how you can support us at www.nichs.org.uk

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