

# FROM THE HEART

**Autumn  
2022**

**Top energy  
saving tips**

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**Ideas for an  
active autumn**

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**NICHs - keeping  
NI healthy**

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**Recipes &  
puzzles**



**Chest  
Heart &  
Stroke**

## Hello and welcome to our autumn edition of From the Heart.

The last few days have seen a definite switch in the seasons with cooler and darker days setting in. We hope the energy saving tips, health and fitness advice and tasty recipes featured in our latest magazine will be helpful for the weeks ahead.

This autumn we have been running our blood pressure campaign to raise awareness of the dangers associated with undetected and untreated high blood pressure. We are delighted to share the success of this campaign with you as well as highlight some of the other areas of work we are involved in such as research and campaigning.

Included in this edition are profiles of some of our wonderful volunteers. NICHS volunteers play a key role in many of our services- programmes such as PREP and our Wellness Sessions would not run in the same way without them. Audrey and Cecil are two of many who selflessly give up their time to support local people affected by chest, heart, and stroke conditions. We would like to say a heartfelt thank you to them and all our other volunteers.

Take care and warm wishes,

**NICHS Care Services Team**



The NICHS Care Services Team at our recent Staff Day.

## Top Tips To Save Energy This Winter



**We have all heard the news stories about the rising cost of living and energy prices but there are some easy things we can do to help with this. Check out the tips below to find out how you can reduce your energy usage over the coming colder months:**

- Try not to overheat rooms. The recommended temperature is 21°C in your main living room and 18°C in other rooms. A 1°C decrease in room temperatures can reduce your fuel bills by up to 10%.
- Don't leave appliances on standby and remember not to leave laptops and phone chargers on charge unnecessarily.
- If possible, have a shower instead of a bath – you can have five 5-minute showers for the cost of a bath.
- Close your curtains in the evening to stop heat escaping. If you have radiators under your window, make sure your curtains don't cover them.

## Do You Know How Much Electricity You Are Using?




The steep increases in the cost of electricity mean it's more important than ever to try and find ways to save on how much electricity we are using. You might be surprised at how much electricity different appliances use:

- **Tumble dryer (2500 W)**  
- £1.30 per hour/ 22p per 10 minutes
- **Electric heater (2500 W)**  
- £1.30 per hour/ 22p per 10 minutes
- **Washing machine (2100 W)**  
- £1.09 per hour/ 17p per 10 minutes
- **Hob (200 W)**  
- 94p per hour /16p per 10 minutes
- **Grill (1500 W)**  
- 78p per hour/ 13p per 10 minutes
- **Microwave (100 W)**  
- 52p per hour/ 9p per 10 minutes
- **Heated blanket (150 W)**  
- 8p per hour/ 1p per 10 minutes
- **Plasma TV (350 W)**  
- 18p per hour/ 3p per 10 minutes
- **Toaster** - 9p per 10 minutes
- **Laptop (50 W)** - 3p per hour

The information above shows an average power rating for each appliance- the actual power rating will depend on the size and specifications of the appliance; therefore, the running cost could be more or less than the figure given. Costs are based on a unit price for electricity of 52p per KWH (the price cap after 1st October 2022).

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- Always wash a full load and spin dry clothes before tumble drying.
  - When buying a new appliance, choose the most energy efficient. Efficiency ratings go from 'A' which indicate the best appliances for energy efficiency to 'G' for the least efficient.
  - You can upgrade heating controls without changing your boiler. Modern controls are much more accurate than older systems.
  - Turn off lights when you leave the room and invest in low energy bulbs.
  - If your hot water tank has a thermostat set it to 60°C.
  - Keep draughts out. Fit draught-proofing strips and draught excluders around doors and seal gaps around window frames.
  - Defrosting frozen food in the fridge overnight typically reduces its cooking time by half.
  - When making a cuppa, boil only the water you need rather than a kettleful.

# Handy Numbers To Have

## National Energy Action NI

This charity aims to improve the lives of people in fuel poverty. They provide energy and income maximisation advice and advocate on issues including improving the energy efficiency of homes.



[www.nea.org.uk](http://www.nea.org.uk)  
T: 028 9023 9909

## The Consumer Council

The Consumer Council provides free independent support and advice on consumer issues. It also has the power to investigate complaints on your behalf.



[www.consumercouncil.org.uk](http://www.consumercouncil.org.uk)  
T: 028 9025 1600

## RNID

This charity is there for people who are deaf or have hearing loss or tinnitus. They offer people who wear NHS hearing aids information and advice as well providing hearing aids servicing. The charity also runs free Hearing Aid User Support Services throughout each Trust area. If you would like to find out more about this support, please get in touch with one of the team:



### South Eastern Trust

[hazel.wilson@rnid.org.uk](mailto:hazel.wilson@rnid.org.uk)

### Belfast Trust

[oneil-melissa.oneil@rnid.org.uk](mailto:oneil-melissa.oneil@rnid.org.uk)  
[heather.abernethy@rnid.org.uk](mailto:heather.abernethy@rnid.org.uk)

### Northern Trust

[lain.irvine@rnid.org.uk](mailto:lain.irvine@rnid.org.uk)

### Western Trust

[mary.cruickshank@rnid.org.uk](mailto:mary.cruickshank@rnid.org.uk)

### Southern Trust

[carolyn.ritchie@rnid.org.uk](mailto:carolyn.ritchie@rnid.org.uk)

## Advice Space

Formerly known as Citizens Advice, Advice Space provide support and guidance and help people to exercise their rights and obtain fair treatment under the law. The NICHS Stroke Family Support team can arrange a fast track referral to the organisation.



## Age NI

This charity is dedicated to helping everyone make the most of later life. It provides products and services specifically designed for older people.



T: 028 9024 5729

## Home Safety Scheme

This scheme is provided by local Councils. A Home Safety Officer can visit you to provide safety information and advice on topics such as falls in the home, fire safety and electrical dangers. They can also provide free accident prevention equipment where necessary. Contact your Council to find out more.

## Police Non-Emergency

For non-emergency police enquiries you should call 101. If you have a hearing or speech impairment, you can use their textphone service on **18001 101**.

## Action Fraud

Action Fraud is the UK's national reporting centre for fraud and cybercrime where you should report fraud if you have been scammed, defrauded or experienced cybercrime.

[www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)  
T: 0300 123 2040

## Society of St Vincent De Paul

This charity aims to fight poverty. It may be able to help people who are struggling with the cost of essential household items such as food, clothing, heating or other household bills.



[www.svp.ie](http://www.svp.ie)  
T: 028 9035 1561

## Foodbanks

The Trussel Trust support a nationwide network of foodbanks, providing emergency food and support to people in crisis. The foodbanks partner with a range of professional agencies such as Advice Space and health professionals who identify people in crisis and issue foodbank vouchers.



T: 0808 208 2138

## NI Direct

This service provides lots of useful information from a range of government departments.



[www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)  
T: 0300 200 7899

# An Update On Our Blood Pressure Campaign



**Throughout September and October, we have been running our blood pressure awareness campaign which came as a result of our concern around the number of people living with undetected high blood pressure and the fact 1 in 2 heart attacks and strokes are linked to the condition.**

We are delighted by the impact the campaign has had to date. The NICHS Health Promotion team have been out visiting a number of our Wellness Sessions, delivering free blood pressure checks to our service users as well as blood pressure information sessions. The Wellness Session facilitated by Emma Fallon from our Care team was one of the groups to benefit from the checks and Emma says; "We recently had Kyle from our Health Promotion team come to our Newry Wellness Session to talk about blood pressure and the importance of knowing our numbers. The visit was invaluable! Kyle took the time to speak to every client and measure their blood pressure. At the following Wellness Session, I had several people tell me they had followed up with their GP for further information and help after their blood pressure check. They were extremely thankful and grateful to know their numbers!"



We also recently ran an Online Blood Pressure Advice Session featuring clinicians and health professionals. The session gave information about preventing, detecting and managing high blood pressure to help reduce stroke and heart attack risk. There were demonstrations on how to measure your blood pressure at home as well as lots of useful information on how to keep your blood pressure at a healthy level. You can watch the Online Advice Session (as well as other great blood pressure related videos) on our YouTube channel- [www.youtube.com/user/nichestheartstroke](http://www.youtube.com/user/nichestheartstroke)

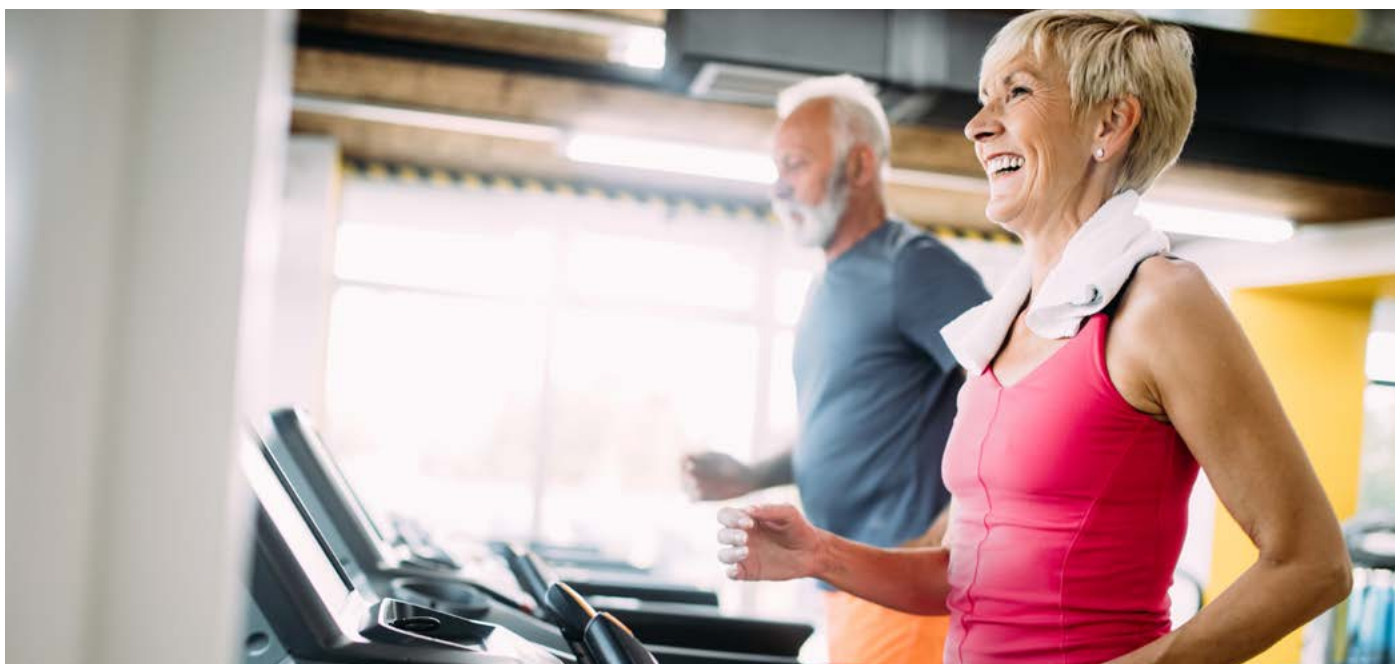
Our campaign has included extensive outdoor, bus, radio and digital advertising to increase public awareness and we have had good media interest with articles appearing in the News Letter, The Irish News, Sunday Life and Belfast Live. We hope all these activities coupled with the work of our teams on the ground will help increase public awareness of the dangers of undetected high blood pressure and that lives will have been saved as a result of this campaign.

**For further information and support about blood pressure, visit [nichs.org.uk/highbloodpressure](http://nichs.org.uk/highbloodpressure)**

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# Keep Active This Autumn

Even though the colder weather is setting in it is still important we try to stay active and exercise regularly. Read on to find out more about the Healthwise scheme and how it could help support you in being more active.



## Healthwise

**Healthwise is the regional physical activity referral scheme (PARS). If you meet the required criteria, a health professional can refer you to your local leisure centre for free membership and advice on getting and staying active.**

Healthwise is designed for people with health-related conditions who may benefit from regular exercise under the guidance of qualified exercise professionals. The programme helps individuals manage and improve their health and encourages people of all abilities to take part.

The scheme is funded by the Public Health Agency (PHA) and runs for 12 weeks. It delivers support, guidance and motivation for people to become and remain physically active. It offers a range of activities such as gym sessions, group-based activities, walking or cycling, so there really is something for everyone! The scheme is referral based and referrals can be made from a wide range of registered health professionals for clients who meet the criteria for Healthwise, including GPs, practice-based Pharmacists, Physiotherapists and Specialist Nurses.

## How Can I Take Part In Healthwise?

Only those clients who meet the following criteria can be referred on to Healthwise:

- 19 years old and over
- Inactive lifestyle
- A BMI of greater than 25 and less than 40
- Have one or more of the following: hypertension, hyperlipidaemia, impaired glucose levels or diabetes, family history of heart disease, asthma, bronchitis or COPD, musculoskeletal conditions, or a mild or moderate mental health problem
- Motivated to change

Once a referral has been received and accepted, it is allocated to a Healthwise facilitator within the leisure centre of your choice. They will contact you to book you in for your initial one to one consultation. After this you will receive a personalised and tailored programme with reviews at weeks 4 and 8 and a final sign off review at the end of week 12. After your 12 weeks you may be offered a discounted membership to continue your physical activity journey.

Council leisure centres also offer other initiatives to encourage physical activity such as active ageing programmes and concessions for the over 60s. Active ageing programmes provide a variety of timetabled activities and are a great way to keep active, meet new people, have fun and try something new! Why not contact your local leisure centre to find out more?

## Working Out At Our Wellness Sessions

The NICHS Wellness Sessions are back in action and they have been offering a wide range of exercise taster sessions and activities recently.



Michael Dyer is one of our Care Coordinators in the South-Eastern Trust. Michael is a qualified Chi Me instructor and he has recently started delivering Chi Me classes to clients who attend his Wellness Sessions.

Chi Me is a simplified version of Tai Chi. It is a series of simple movements, linked together to create a gentle, flowing, and easy to follow Tai Chi style class. The beauty of this class is that it is suitable for any age group and can be completed standing or even seated in a chair. Chi Me is therefore ideal for older adults, mixed ability groups and people with long-term health conditions. Chi Me is fantastic for movement and the focus on breathing is great for mindfulness and mental health too.

The feedback Michael has received about his Chi Me sessions has been overwhelmingly positive with participants finding sessions both fun and relaxing.

Chi Me hasn't been the only physical activity offered at the Wellness Sessions over recent months. We have also had Boccia, Boxercise, chair-based exercise, archery, New Age Kurling and FLExercise!

### Boccia

Boccia is a target sport, played with hand sized leather balls. It is an adapted version of bowls and is played from a seated position which makes the game inclusive for all abilities. The balls are made of leather and can be thrown underarm, overarm or rolled along the floor. The object of the game is to play your ball as close to the white target ball as possible. Ramps are also available to assist those who need additional support to propel the ball.

### New Age Kurling

New Age Kurling is a target sport played with kurling discs that can be played along the floor towards a target mat. It is an adapted version of curling which is played at the Winter Olympics. The object of the game is to play your kurling disc as close to the centre of the target as possible. Pushers and ramps are also available to assist those who need additional support to release the kurling disc.



### FLExercise

The FLExercise system is a mix of low impact physical exercises and movement designed to improve posture, body alignment, increase strength, flexibility and balance, leaving you with more energy. It puts an emphasis on functional fitness as the movements all mimic those which we do in our day to day lives. By practicing these movements in class, it helps maintain and build on strength and balance, which in turn helps to avoid injury from trips and falls. Exercises are preformed to a wide variety of uplifting music and best of all it's good fun and suitable for all abilities.

So why not reap the benefits of physical activity and try something new this winter?

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# In The Kitchen



## Winter Lemon Chicken and Barley Soup

This refreshing take on a traditional winter favourite is perfect for those chilly winter days.

- 1 bag frozen soup mix (celery, onion and carrot)
- 1 leek
- 1 garlic bulb
- 150g pearl barley
- 1 litre chicken stock
- 8 chicken drumsticks
- 1 lemon
- 2 bay leaves
- ½ tsp chilli flakes (optional)
- ½ tsp white pepper
- ½ cup cream
- Handful chopped tarragon

### Method

1. In a large pot, sauté the soup mix and leek.
2. Season with garlic, chilli and pepper.
3. Toast barley in the pot and add chicken stock and bay leaves. Allow to simmer for 10 minutes.
4. Add in your chicken drumsticks and juice of a lemon and allow to simmer until chicken is falling from the bone.
5. Ensure you remove all the bones of the chicken and the 2 bay leaves.
6. Allow to cool and mix the cream with two tablespoons of the soup mix in a separate bowl. Then add to the soup pot and mix through.
7. Sprinkle with lemon zest and tarragon and enjoy.

## Sweet Potato and Chickpea Curry

This warming dish made in the slow cooker is a great way to feed the family and save some pennies. A slow cooker uses less electricity than our conventional ovens and therefore is cheaper to run. This is a vegetarian dish, but you can use chicken or beef instead of chickpeas if you prefer.

- 500g sweet potato (cubed)
- 1 can coconut milk
- 150g mushrooms
- 1 can chickpeas (drained)
- 1 onion (chopped)
- 3 large handfuls of spinach
- 1 tbsp curry paste
- 1 tsp curry powder
- 1tsp dried thyme
- 1tsp dried ginger
- Salt and pepper

### Method

1. Combine all the ingredients except the spinach into a medium sized slow cooker. If you are using chicken or beef instead of chickpeas you can also dice and add at this stage.
2. Cook on low for 4-6 hours.
3. Mix spinach through and serve.





## Winter Spiced Pear and Berry Hazelnut Crumble with Banana Ice Cream

This (almost!) guilt free dessert is delicious and it won't break the bank to make. Using frozen fruit is cheaper and there is no waste from leftovers.

### Base

- 200g frozen berry mix
- 3 pears
- 1 tbsp brown sugar
- Orange zest (optional)

### Topping

- 1 cup rolled oats
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup whole wheat flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped hazelnuts
- 1 tbsp brown sugar
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp nutmeg
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp ground ginger
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup low fat butter or alternative

### Ice Cream

- 3 bananas
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup milk

### Method

1. Chop the pears and mix with sugar and frozen berries in an ovenproof dish.
2. Rub topping ingredients together with the butter until combined. Layer this over the pear and berry base.
3. Bake in the oven at 180°C for 40–45 minutes. If the top begins to brown, cover with tin foil.
4. To make the ice cream, finely slice the bananas and lay them on a baking sheet lined with baking paper. Place in the freezer for roughly 2 hours until frozen. Place frozen bananas into a food processor with the milk and blend until smooth. Place into a container in the freezer to allow it to refreeze.

If you are feeling adventurous, you can mix toppings in with your banana ice cream! Here are a few ideas:

- Chocolate chips
- Chopped nuts
- Cinnamon
- Vanilla essence
- Peanut butter
- Blueberries

# In The Kitchen



## Money Saving Cooking Tips

Winter is a great time for lots of hearty dishes to keep us warm, but it is also a time of the year when we spend more on our groceries, heating and electric. Here are a few ways to help you save some money over the winter months and still make those hearty dishes we all love:



Using your slow cooker is a great way to save money. The average slow cooker will cost five times less than using the oven to cook the same dish. Slow cookers require minimal food preparation, are easy to use and are great for batch cooking.



Batch cooking is a great way to prevent food wastage. You only need to cook once and you can store the meal in the freezer for up to three months. Make sure you date your food before freezing it in portions.



Try to have some meat free days. In 2003 the concept of a meat free day every week was introduced, and it has grown in popularity ever since. Not only is it great for our planet and our health, it's great for our pockets too as meat alternatives such as vegetables, chickpeas, beans and nuts are a lot cheaper.



Buy frozen fruits and vegetables. They are cheaper, you only use what you need so there is no wastage, and they tend to have better nutritional value than their fresh counterparts as they are frozen so soon after being picked. As a bonus, they normally come already chopped so there is less preparation time!



Use your freezer wisely. There is an abundance of foods that are safe to freeze, and this can prevent food otherwise going to waste. Some examples include:

- Hard cheeses in an air tight container.
- Milk and dairy free milks but remember they will expand slightly when frozen and will need to be defrosted thoroughly before use.
- Butter freezes well when wrapped tightly or in an airtight container.
- Whether it's homemade or shop bought, avoid wasting bread by putting it in a freezer bag. It's a good idea to slice it before freezing so you can easily lift out what you need.
- In its natural form cream does not freeze well due to its high fat content. However, if you whip the cream first you can freeze in portions for up to 3 weeks.
- Purée tomatoes before freezing in an airtight container. You will have tomatoes for sauces at the ready!

# Recent Health Awareness Events

## National Cholesterol Month

October was National Cholesterol month. We all need a certain amount of cholesterol but having too much of the 'bad' kind can lead to clogged arteries and potentially life-threatening conditions such as cardiac episodes and/or stroke. A high cholesterol level doesn't usually have any symptoms and may be caused by your genes. It is important to know your cholesterol level and make healthy lifestyle choices to ensure good heart health. A cholesterol check takes the form of a simple blood test and you can ask your health professional for an appointment.

## Cheap And Cheerful Cleaning!

Some of the team were recently reminiscing about cleaning tips that had been passed down through the generations. Here are some useful natural cleaning tips which are not only greener but also cheaper.

- Baking powder or bicarbonate of soda are great at absorbing odours in the bin or fridge. They can also be used for many cleaning jobs- sprinkle on a damp cloth to use as a gentle surface cleaner on worktops, sinks, ovens and bathtubs.
- White vinegar is a natural disinfectant as it is acidic. It can get rid of sticky build-ups, rust and hard water stains. It also reduces surface bacteria, making it a safe alternative to bleach.
- Lemon juice can be used in the same way as white vinegar. It also works on alkaline stains such as soap scum on sinks and shines oxidised metal.

## World Stroke Day

Every year World Stroke Day is marked on 29th October.

This year's theme focused on saving time and how precious the minutes are after stroke occurs. By being aware of and promoting the FAST campaign you can do your bit to try and help ensure people access expert medical advice faster, which can reduce complications and speed up recovery after stroke.

### KNOW THE SYMPTOMS OF A STROKE...

- F** FACE - has their face fallen on one side?  
Can they smile?
- A** ARMS - can they raise both arms and keep them there?
- S** SPEECH - is their speech slurred?
- T** TIME - to call 999 if you see any single one of these signs.



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# How We Are Keeping Northern Ireland Healthy

Whilst reflecting on National Cholesterol Month and World Stroke Day we thought we should share some of the highlights from our 2021/2022 Impact Report which details how the work of NICHS is helping to keep NI healthy. You can read the full Impact Report on our website - [visit nichs.org.uk/about-us/impact](https://www.nichs.org.uk/about-us/impact)

## We Care

Number of people we supported, with “chest”, “heart”, and “stroke” as their main condition, and their carers:

**517**  
Respiratory

**131**  
Heart

**1988**  
Stroke

**146**  
Carers

Number of attendances to each of our services over the year:



**1,019**  
PREP and PREP  
Online



**415**  
Breathing  
Better



**909**  
Taking  
Control



**138**  
Carers'  
Programme



**218**  
Inspire  
Choir



**158**  
Young  
Stroke Online



**851**  
Surviving  
Stroke Wellness  
Sessions



**541**  
Surviving Stroke  
Online



**195**  
Heart Strong



**491**  
Walking Groups

## We Prevent



**14,528**

**adults and children and 214 organisations benefitted from our range of health promotion services**



**626**

benefitted from our Health and Homelessness Service



**5,964**

parents and young people benefitted from our schools programmes



**4,591**

Workplaces were involved with our workplace health promotion programme



**3,447** people were provided with Well Checks

## We Research



**14**

**research studies live at the end of the financial year**



**9**

**new projects funded this year**



**£1,902,292**

**currently invested in research**

## We Campaign



### Stroke manifesto

We campaigned for reform of stroke services, and launched our Stroke Manifesto at one of the first post-Covid hybrid events held at Stormont.



### Asthma

We raised awareness about asthma and its dangers – especially amongst school children.



### Service user focused

We championed the needs of people experiencing Long Covid, and ensured their involvement / PPI in our work.

**We are only able to make such an impact within local communities thanks to public donations. As a charity, almost 90% of our work is funded exclusively by donations and in 2021/2022 we were able to raise £3.75 million thanks to the generosity of the people of Northern Ireland and we can't thank everyone enough.**

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# Puzzles



NOVEMBER  
OCTOBER  
APPLE  
HARVEST  
AUTUMN  
FALL  
SQUASH  
CORN  
HALLOWEEN  
PEARS  
YELLOW  
PUMPKIN  
SQUIRREL  
COLORS  
ORANGE  
THANKSGIVING  
SEPTEMBER  
CHANGE  
SEASON  
ACORN  
FESTIVAL  
MIGRATION  
VEGETABLES  
LEAVES

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

## Autumn quiz

1. What is autumn known as in North America?
2. Which English romantic poet composed 'To Autumn' after a walk near Winchester one autumnal evening?
3. Pumpkin fragments dated between 7,000 and 5,500 BC have been found in which country: China, Egypt, Germany or Mexico?
4. Who did Autumn Kelly marry in May 2008?
5. Bonfire Night takes place every November but in which year did Guy Fawkes try to blow up Parliament?
6. Which King did Guy Fawkes try to blow up?
7. What are hedgehogs' spines or quills made from?
8. With around 400 players participating, what are the WCC, which are held annually on the second Sunday in October in Northamptonshire?
9. In Australia, autumn begins in which month?
10. In 2009, Autumn was the 81st most popular name for girls born in which country?
11. Name the pigment which trees stop producing, thus causing leaves to lose their green colour?
12. Pheasant shooting season starts at the beginning of which month?
13. Which federal holiday in the United States is often said to mark the end of summer and the start of autumn?
14. In Britain, the autumn internationals or November internationals take part in which sport?
15. SAD is sometimes known as autumnal depression. What does SAD stand for?
16. Oktoberfest is held annually in which German city?
17. Which celebration is influenced by the Celtic autumn festival Samhain?

# NICHS Volunteer Profiles

## Cecil

**My name is Cecil Simpson and I have been a volunteer with NICHS for 5 years.**



Following my stroke, I attended PREP and worked hard to recover movement in my arm, hand, leg, and foot, with lots of exercise and walking. My main aim was to get back to playing golf which, with the help from my buddies at Donaghadee Golf Club, I have managed to play regularly.

Golf has been my main aid to recovery. I join my friends on various golf trips around clubs in Ireland and the south of Spain. I have received lots of encouragement to continue playing golf as an aid to my recovery.

I have a golfing friend, Trevor, who is missing 3 fingers on each hand since birth. He recently joined EDGA (European Disabled Golf Association) and asked me if I would caddy for him at some events. I travelled to England where Trevor played at a tournament in Essex, finishing third. I was amazed at the different disabilities of some of the competitors, many with only one arm or leg, showing the benefits of playing golf to advance in life with sport.

My next away tournament with Trevor took us to Portugal for the Open Championship. There was a golfer there who had one leg and used crutches. His caddy placed the ball on a tee peg, the golfer threw away his crutches and hopped into position to drive his ball. Straight and long down the first fairway, bringing joy and happiness in many ways. I have been to many tournaments with Trevor and the friendship of these golfers is unbelievable.

Nothing is a problem and life goes on as usual. Golf is no longer a walk spoiled, but now a walk to enjoy and smell the flowers along the way.

## Audrey

**My name is Audrey and I have been a volunteer at the Newtownards PREP groups since 2018.**



On 30th September 2017 I had a kidney transplant and it was during this operation that I suffered a stroke. I was left with unsteadiness, not great use of my left hand etc. My balance was pretty rough at the start. I had problems with words starting with 'S'. I attended speech therapy which really helped, then I was approached by NICHS to see if I would be interested in attending their PREP class in Newtownards. I completed the 12-week course and at the end of this I was asked if I would like to volunteer with the charity, which I did, and which I thoroughly enjoy to this day. It's great watching peoples' progression over the weeks.

I did a lot of craft work years ago and was thankful that I was able to continue this after my stroke, but I did find I had to alter how I did some things. I couldn't do crocheting the way I was meant to, but learnt a new way, thanks to the help of someone else who had a stroke. I continue to do crocheting, redwork sewing, patchwork and a lot of baking which I really enjoy.

My attitude to my stroke is to keep going and do the best you can, no matter what. A stroke doesn't stop you from doing what you enjoy, it just changes how you do things.

If I can abseil down the front of the Europa Hotel in Belfast for charity, it shows you that stroke doesn't stop you being a daredevil! Life with Stroke is what you make it- never give up what you enjoy.

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### Quiz Answers:

1. The Fall, 2. John Keats, 3. Mexico, 4. Peter Phillips (grandson of Queen Elizabeth II), 5. 1605, 6. James I, 7. Keratin, 8. World Conker Championships, 9. March, 10. United States, 11. Chlorophyll, 12. October, 13. Labor Day (first Monday in September), 14. Rugby Union, 15. Seasonal Affective Disorder, 16. Munich, 17. Halloween

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