

Pulse

Spring 2022

**The return of the
Red Dress
Fun Run**

How having a
heart attack
changed my life

**Top tips for
heart
health**

Stroke survivor
**Craig's 50km
challenge**

Chest
Heart &
Stroke

75
YEARS
ON YOUR SIDE



75TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS CONTINUE

Since the last edition of Pulse, we have continued to celebrate our special 75th Anniversary, with many memorable moments coming from our #NICH575 Challenges. Our series of autumn events kicked off in September with the 75 for 75 Challenge which was inspired by our anniversary year and saw a group of fundraisers trek 7.5km to the top of Slieve Bearnagh before coming down the mountain via a 75m abseil! In October, almost 150 of our supporters took part in the Belfast City Marathon, raising just over £40,000. October also saw the launch of a new NICH5 event, Fright to Remember, where participants

were some of the first in Northern Ireland to experience the Double-Dare Ultimate Zipline Challenge at Colin Glen Forest Park. 2021's challenges came to a jolly end in December with our festive fundraisers taking on our Santa Abseil at Belfast Castle.

Our 75th Anniversary continues until June and we are looking forward to our 2022 #NICH575 Challenges.

To find out more and sign up to a challenge, visit nichs.org.uk/events

WELCOME TO OUR NEW CORPORATE PARTNERS

We are delighted to have two new local businesses recently join us as corporate partners. In December 2021 business advisory firm, BDO Northern Ireland, announced a two-year partnership to support us with our vital work. Huhtamaki Foodservice Belfast chose us as their 2022 charity partner of the year in January, with the company setting a fundraising target of £20,000.

We are very thankful to have been chosen as BDO's and Huhtamaki's charity partner as almost 90% of our care, prevention and research services are funded exclusively by public donations. The funds raised by these



corporate partnerships will be vital in enabling us to continue to support the local community and provide life-changing services for people living with chest, heart and stroke conditions and their families.

To find out more about how your business or organisation can partner with us, visit nichs.org.uk/fundraiseatwork



CHRISTMAS 2021 APPEAL SUCCESS

Donations to our Christmas 2021 appeal are still coming in but we are pleased to announce the total to date is an amazing £172,653. Thank you to everyone who donated in support of our work and helped raise this fantastic sum of money.

The theme of our Christmas 2021 appeal was 'The Little Things' and we were delighted to launch a TV advert as part of our campaign which highlighted the 'little things' that many people living with a chest, heart or stroke illness don't get to enjoy at Christmas. Many of those affected are left with debilitating psychological symptoms and often physical disabilities, meaning they are

unable to do many of the little things we take for granted such as wrapping presents for loved ones or decorating the Christmas tree.

The Christmas 2021 appeal highlighted the problems many people with a chest, heart or stroke condition face, but it also showed how, with help from our supporters, we can provide life-changing services and help people enjoy more of the little things they love, at Christmas and beyond. The funds raised from our Christmas 2021 appeal will help ensure we can continue to do this. Thank you.

ADVICE SPACE HELP NICHS SERVICE USERS CLAIM OVER £664,000

Advice Space, formerly known as Citizens Advice, provide support and guidance and help people to exercise their rights and obtain fair treatment under the law.

Our Care Services team have been working with Advice Space since 2018. Advice Space help support our service users across a broad range of issues including housing, employment, consumer issues and benefits.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, Advice Space have helped NICHS service users claim

**advice
space**
support & guidance

an amazing **£664,742** worth of help and we look forward to helping more people through this partnership in 2022.

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News



HEART TO HEART POD/VOBCAST

In October 2021 we launched our pod/vodcast series, Heart to Heart. This six-part series of emotional and inspiring interviews is hosted by well-known broadcaster Sarah Travers who speaks to survivors, supporters and friends of NICHS about their experiences of living with chest, heart and stroke conditions and the work we are doing to lead the fight against these diseases.

From life after a soul-shattering stroke or heart attack, to living with Long COVID and asthma, as well as survivors who have gone to extraordinary

lengths to give something back, Heart to Heart focuses on the experiences of local people. It also features medical experts and NICHS staff who explain how such conditions can be treated, managed and prevented. Country music legend Philomena Begley even makes a star appearance in the series!

Heart to Heart is available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, the NICHS YouTube channel and our website at nichs.org.uk/hearttoheart

STROKE MANIFESTO LAUNCH

September 2021 saw the launch of our Stroke Manifesto, "Stroke Reform in Northern Ireland – Time for Action" at an event at Stormont attended by political figures and leading health officials. The Manifesto calls on the Department of Health and the Northern Ireland Executive to act on stroke reform in NI to improve stroke prevention, treatment and care for stroke survivors and their families.

Northern Ireland urgently needs the development of a Stroke Strategy which addresses prevention, acute care, rehabilitation and support in the community and our Manifesto outlines ten objectives to achieve improvements across these areas.



You can read the Manifesto here nichs.org.uk/campaigning

NEW HEART STRONG ONLINE PROGRAMME

Heart Strong Online, our 6-week cardiac education programme, commenced in October 2021. This free, weekly online workshop is available to people across all of Northern Ireland's Health and Social Care Trusts and covers topics such as Understanding your Condition, Emotions after Diagnosis, Physical Activity, Healthy Eating, Adopting Healthier Habits and Goal Setting. The response to the new programme has been fantastic and we look forward to developing Heart Strong Online throughout 2022.

You can find out more about the Heart Strong Online programme here nichs.org.uk/heart-strong-online



NIPPING SMOKING IN CARS IN THE BUTT

Back in October 2021 we welcomed the announcement by the Health Minister that he would bring into force regulations to prohibit smoking in cars where children are present early in 2022. We were then pleased to see the Assembly pass a motion in December 2021 to bring the ban into force and the law finally came into effect on 1st February.

We are delighted progress has been made in this area as we led the campaign to bring in the ban from 2014. As smoking is the single greatest cause of preventable illness and premature death in Northern Ireland, killing around 2,300 people each year, the new ban is a positive step towards protecting the health of local children, as well as discouraging smoking in the general population.

Research



CHILDREN – SIT LESS MOVE MORE STUDY

Investing in high-quality, ground-breaking research is at the heart of what Northern Ireland Chest Heart and Stroke does and this academic year we are funding the University of Ulster's 8-week Children – Sit Less Move More (C-SLAMM) study.

The C-SLAMM study aims to get 7-9-year-old pupils to be more active in their classrooms and spend less time sitting. The study is investigating whether the successful Transform-us Australian model could be adapted to meet the requirements of schools in Northern Ireland.

The study began in September and seven schools have completed the first phase. 2022 will see a further seven schools begin their journey to move more and sit less.

The study aims to incorporate activity into everyday class lessons. It does not change the lesson content, but it looks at how the lesson plan could be made more active. This can be achieved by using standing desks and standing activity stations around the classroom as well as by encouraging active break times and lunch hours. The study does not stop there however, as pupils are given active homework and parents are engaged through newsletters.

NICHS hopes that if the C-SLAMM study is successful, we can develop our current Well Schools Programmes further and use the learnings to help shape a healthier future teaching method for pupils.

Many thanks to NICHS ambassador, former Ulster and Ireland star Chris Henry for his support for the C-SLAMM study. Chris was awarded a Testimonial Season in 2018/19 to mark his distinguished career in professional rugby and he chose to dedicate the year to raising funds and awareness to support our work. This contributed to an outstanding fundraising total of £150,000, a proportion of which is helping fund the C-SLAMM study.

TAKING PREP A STEP FURTHER

NICHS's Post Rehab Exercise Programme (PREP) provides additional support for stroke survivors after statutory rehab. Aimed at helping people to rebuild their life and gain confidence following a stroke, PREP does this through a combination of education and physio-developed exercises which focus primarily on the lower limbs.

A team from Ulster University (PI: Dr Katy Pedlow) are currently working alongside our Care Services department to further develop PREP and evaluate how to best integrate more upper limb exercise, focusing on the arm and hand, into the current programme offering.

Our first PREP group which incorporates the new arm and hand exercises started in January and we are looking forward to hearing the participants' and Ulster University team's



feedback at the end of this programme cycle. The Ulster University team hope their research will help shape future stroke services to provide a feasible method to support long-term upper limb rehabilitation for stroke survivors living in the community.

Find out more about NICHS research projects at nichs.org.uk/research

Events

**THE MOST HEARTWARMING
EVENT OF THE YEAR IS BACK...**

Red Dress Run

FUN

Supported by

MACE

This February we are asking you to have a heart and come together with us to raise awareness and funds to fight heart disease.

Sadly, 4 people in Northern Ireland die every day from heart disease and coronary heart disease is the biggest single cause of premature death of under 75-year olds. Today there are over 335,000 people living with a chest, heart or stroke condition in NI. That's 1 in 5 of us and we all know a family who have been affected.

Why take part?

Our vision is a Northern Ireland free from chest, heart and stroke illnesses. Despite the pandemic in 2020/21 we:

- Invested nearly £2 million in fighting chest, heart and stroke illnesses
- Supported 11,287 people and organisations across all our services
- Have £1,717,820 currently invested in chest, heart and stroke research
- Launched NI's first community Long COVID recovery service

It's only thanks to your support that we are able to continue to make a difference to the lives of the thousands of local people affected by chest, heart and stroke conditions. Almost 90% of NICHs's vital care, life-saving prevention and ground-breaking research services are funded exclusively by public donations. The funds raised by you are essential to enable us to continue to support the local community and provide life-changing services for people living with chest, heart and stroke illnesses and their families.



Come run, walk, dance, skip or wheel 5K with us on Sunday 27th February 2022 at Stormont Estate. Dress red, wear your heart on your sleeve to remember a loved one, have a laugh while we raise funds for our cause and together we can help make a lasting change towards heart health in Northern Ireland. Everyone is welcome to come along and join in the fun - even the family pooch!

Don't worry if you can't make it to the live event. You can do 5K your way anytime in February because by working together, step by step, we'll help get local people fit, healthy and back on their feet.

Many thanks to our charity partner MACE for supporting the Red Dress Fun Run 2022.

Find out more and sign up now at nichs.org.uk/RedDressRun or call our team on 028 9032 0184.

Chest
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Survivor Story

Julie McAllister HEART ATTACK



Julie McAllister, 49 from Carrickfergus, is marking an unusual anniversary this year, but an extremely important one – the ten-year anniversary since she survived a major heart attack, aged just 39.

This year, Julie will be marking the occasion by taking part in our Red Dress Fun Run 2022, supported by MACE. This will be her fifth time taking on the five-kilometre run or walk event which aims to raise funds and awareness for heart disease.

Julie says, “The day I had my heart attack was a normal Saturday. I went along to a Tae Bo class, and about fifteen minutes in, while we were warming up, I suddenly felt sick. I had never felt a sickness like it.”

“I went out of the class and called my husband, Derek. I told him I was feeling unwell and asked could he come and collect me. I knew immediately what was happening, and when he arrived I told him I thought I was having a heart attack and that he needed to call 999.”

The mum of four kissed her family goodbye before being wheeled in for an emergency triple bypass surgery, convinced she might never see them again.

Coming out the other side, she learned the true importance of looking after your heart health. “I exercise regularly but have been advised not to take my heart rate too high. I walk three to five miles, five days a week, and I go to the gym for one hour three times per week. The cardiac rehab taught me how important it is to keep my heart muscle strong through exercise,” explains Julie.

“I ran my first Red Dress Run in 2017 on the fifth anniversary of surviving my major heart attack. Since then, I’ve been running every year for the charity and on February 27th, I will be donning my red dress for the fifth time and stepping out to raise awareness and much needed funds, so NI Chest Heart & Stroke can continue to help rebuild healthy local hearts just like they’ve done for me.”

DID YOU KNOW?

HEART ATTACK can strike anyone, at any time. If you spot signs of a heart attack, STOP and call 999.

- S** – Something’s not right – symptoms can start slowly.
- T** – Tightness or pain in the chest, pain in the arm, neck or jaw.
- O** – Other symptoms such as shortness of breath, nausea or sweating.
- P** – Phone 999 immediately.



NICHS ambassador and firefighter Graham Ross from Whitehead will also be taking part for the fifth year, running in memory of his father Cameron. Graham always brings the fun to the event and loves, in his words, “dressing up like an eejit and doing silly things if it helps raise awareness and funds for our local heart charity.” In 2021 Graham ran his 5K dressed as DC Comic hero The Flash as part of the virtual event, but who will he be stepping out as in February 2022? Watch this space!

Graham explains, “I lost my dad in 2016 and with every step I take, I get a chance to remember him and raise money to help fight against heart disease. I hope he will be proud of me. I also run for my little daughter Eva. Being fit and healthy means everything to me and I hope I can inspire other local families, all generations, to join in the fun this February, and take positive steps to keep well both mentally and physically.”

You can hear Julie tell her story on our Heart to Heart pod/vodcast series which is available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, the NICHS YouTube channel and our website at nichs.org.uk/about-us/hearttoheart

For more information on heart health and NICHS cardiac services, visit nichs.org.uk/hearttoheart

“When I had my heart attack at such a young age, I realised how important their support would have been in my recovery. I know that this support will be important in the future and that the charity will be there for me, so I will do as much as I can to raise awareness for them.”

The Red Dress Run went virtual last year due to COVID-19 restrictions, with hundreds of participants taking part in their local area across Northern Ireland and raising a staggering £50,000 to combat heart disease. This year, the event returns to its home venue of Stormont Estate, however the virtual element remains, so participants who can't make it to the main event can complete 5K their way during the month of February.

Health

1 Keep Active

Keeping active not only has great benefits for your physical health but also your mental wellbeing, so break up the time you spend sitting as much as possible. Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate activity per week such as brisk walking, riding a bike or an exercise class. Twice a week incorporate strengthening activities into your routine such as Pilates or get creative and turn tins of food or milk cartons into weights. Remember, every minute counts!



2 Eat Well

Are you stuck in a rut of eating the same foods day in, day out? We recommend using the Eatwell Guide (www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/the-eatwell-guide) to help plan meals to ensure your body gains all the nutrients it requires from each of the main food groups. Always try to read food labels to help choose options that are low in sugar, salt and fat and remember to watch your portion sizes. Portion sizes are linked to the size of your hand, so children's portions will be smaller than adult's, and women's portions smaller than men's.



7 WAYS TO HELP KEEP YOUR HEART HEALTHY

February is National Heart Month so here are some top tips on things we can all do to look after our heart health.



3 What about Vitamin D?

Vitamin D is an essential vitamin for everyone and we get it from two main sources, sunlight, and food. With the dark evenings and because of being inside more during winter, we may not be getting enough vitamin D from sunlight. Our bodies can make most of the vitamin D we need from sunlight on our skin during the 'summer' months (April to the end of September). Our body also uses the vitamin D from foods like oily fish (such as salmon, mackerel, trout, kippers and sardines), eggs and meat, along with foods that have been fortified with vitamin D such as breakfast cereals and most spreads. It may be worth considering a daily supplement – the recommended amount is 10 micrograms a day.



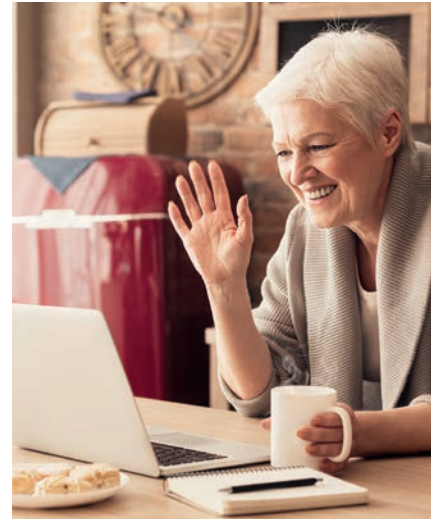
4 Reduce Alcohol

It's normal to want to relax after a challenging day. However, using alcohol to relieve stress or anxiety isn't the answer. Alcohol is a depressant, and although it may boost your mood in the short term it doesn't last and can lead to both physical and mental health problems in the future. Try to keep alcohol intake within recommendations to help reduce your risk. Both men and women should aim not to exceed 14 units of alcohol per week and have 2-3 days that are alcohol free.



5 Keep Connected

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a massive impact on our lives, but it is important that we still maintain connections with those around us within the current guidelines. Connect with family, friends and colleagues and don't forget if we are limited to the amount or where we can connect with each other, make use of online tools. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.



6 Relax

Sometimes life can be hectic, particularly if you are trying to balance both your work and personal life – especially now that so many people in Northern Ireland continue to work from home. Schedule time in your day to relax and do something that you enjoy. Listen to music, take a walk, try some mindfulness techniques, read a book, talk to a friend, exercise or whatever helps you to release the stress from your mind and body.



7 Sleep Well

Sleep is important because it affects our physical and mental wellbeing, however when things crop up in our lives sleep tends to be the first thing that we forget to prioritise. Adults should aim for 7-9 hours of good quality sleep per night. If you're having trouble sleeping, one of the first things to consider is your bedroom. To get a restful night's sleep, you need the right setting. Try and limit technology as much as possible, especially in the 2-3 hours before bedtime. Or why not try some meditation to clear your mind and help you drift off to sleep?



Supporters



REMEMBERING DAVID MAGILL

We were deeply saddened to learn of the passing of one of NICHS's biggest supporters, David Magill, on 11th November 2021.

David was Chairperson of the Glengormley Fundraising Support Group for over 25 years. During this time, under his expert guidance, the Group raised an amazing £350,000. Particularly memorable events were the Annual Ten Pin Bowling Competition held at the local Sportsbowl and the Annual Sponsored Walk at the Loughshore Newtownabbey.

In his early involvement with our charity David paid for a cholesterol measuring machine allowing us to run popular Health Promotion Awareness sessions for the public in Glengormley. Recently, the Magill Family Trust funded the purchase of new equipment for our Head Office.

David was awarded the MBE for his community work with Glengormley Support Group and his support to other local charities. He was a very generous gentleman who always thought of others. He will be sadly missed by his many friends at NICHS and we will pay further tribute to David with a special feature in the next edition of Pulse.

CHRISTOPHER'S BOUNTIFUL BAKE

Twelve-year-old Christopher Brannigan from Hilltown, County Down raised a staggering £1300 for our work at the end of last year. Christopher organised a raffle with the first prize being a delicious Christmas cake Christopher baked himself!

Christopher organised this incredible fundraiser in tribute to his late uncle, John Brannigan, who tragically passed away in October 2021. Christopher was devastated after John's passing and decided to fundraise for us to honour his uncle's memory.



The funds raised by Christopher's hard work will contribute towards rebuilding countless lives across Northern Ireland- thank you Christopher!

To speak to a member of our Community Fundraising team about supporting us in memory of a loved one, contact communityfundraising@nichs.org.uk



NICHS FOCUS ON ALCOHOL

Over the last 75 years, NICHS has consistently lobbied decision makers within the healthcare system and government to make changes to laws and policies that will help prevent chest, heart and stroke illnesses. One of our main concerns today is the dangerous impact consuming too much alcohol can have on the health of the local community.

We all know drinking too much alcohol can have a devastating effect on your heart health and can cause high blood pressure and atrial fibrillation (an abnormal heart rhythm). This increases your risk of heart failure, heart attack and stroke.

In addition, because alcohol contains a lot of calories, drinking a lot can lead to weight gain or even obesity, which are also bad for your heart health.

Due to these health risks NICHS encourages people to drink responsibly.

We also campaign in support of the introduction of Minimum Unit Pricing (MUP) of alcohol.

Scotland pioneered the Minimum Unit Pricing policy idea in 2018 with Wales following suit in 2020. The Republic of Ireland introduced MUP on 1 January 2022. We are arguing that it is time for NI to follow suit. Initially it was proposed that Minimum Unit Pricing might be progressed simultaneously across the island of Ireland. The

collapse of the NI Executive (2017-2020) put an end to those hopes. In July 2020 the Health Minister, Robin Swann committed to “holding a full public consultation on the introduction of Minimum Unit Pricing for Alcohol in Northern Ireland within one year.”

Now, at the beginning of 2022, it is vital that:

- a. the commitment to holding a consultation is delivered, however belatedly and,
- b. as we approach the Assembly elections in May 2022 that candidates and parties make clear whether they will support the introduction of an MUP policy during the next Assembly mandate.

We hosted a virtual seminar on this topic on 25th January and hope to see progress in this area in the near future.



THE WONDERS OF WALKING

Throughout 2021 many stroke survivors took part in our online education programme, PREP. This provided a great opportunity to learn more about stroke, the associated risk factors and lifestyle choices and gain support from peers who have faced a similar situation.

Prior to the pandemic PREP included a circuit-based exercise programme which sadly had to be suspended for many months due to government restrictions. Despite the difficulties faced, we worked hard to find a solution for our service users and in August 2021 we were delighted to be able to return to face-to-face services with our PREP Walking Groups. If we couldn't meet inside, we would meet outside to keep delivering our vital services!

August's PREP Walking Groups were our first face-to-face groups since the lockdown in March 2020 and it was wonderful for both the programme participants, and our team, to meet the faces they had been used to seeing online and exercise in a safe environment.

Our face-to-face services continued to resume across Northern Ireland throughout 2021, subject to COVID-19 restrictions, but the PREP Walking

Group initiative has been such a success we hope to develop this further in 2022.

One participant describes her experience:

"The thing I enjoy the most is meeting up with other people. I usually walk on my own and I'm afraid of going too far but I feel safe in the walking group and enjoy the company. I actually walk further with the group than I would on my own. I would recommend the walking group to anyone – it's not just for the physical benefits but the social aspect of it too."

Tracy:

"I'm usually quite quiet and on my own. Connecting with people on Zoom and in the walking group was really helpful for chatting to others in the same position as me. Meeting the others and the group leaders in person was lovely because I hadn't seen new faces in so long. We built up the walking distance over the weeks and we now walk 2 miles which I'm delighted about! My sisters walk faster than me so it's hard to keep up but the pace in the walking group is right for me and you forget the distance you've completed because you're chatting away to each other. The fatigue is still there but it isn't as bad- you feel better about the fatigue because

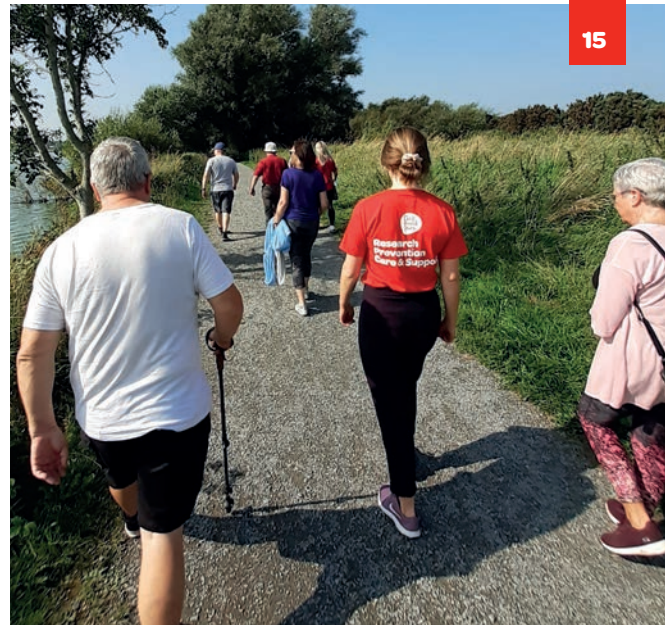


the walk and fresh air have contributed to it. Getting out in the fresh air has helped my mental health and the walking group has given me the confidence to walk more, as long as someone is there with me.”

Stephen:

“I was lucky that when my wife found me early one morning on the bedroom floor unable to stand up that she called my son-in-law for help. He quickly noticed my slurred speech and the twist that was forming at the corner of my mouth and immediately called 999.

Thereafter my good luck has come from the training, the experience and the expertise of those who have cared for me- the paramedics who swiftly transferred me to the Royal Victoria Hospital; the Stroke Team who were waiting for me to arrive; the health professionals at the Stroke Ward. Then there was the Community Stroke Team who took over this invaluable work once I was back home.



Throughout this journey Northern Ireland Chest Heart & Stroke were recommended to me on a number of occasions and I contacted them at the earliest opportunity. Since then I have completed PREP and Taking Control, both extremely beneficial programmes, and I also became a member of the PREP Walking Group.

Even though I am retired, Monday mornings still leave me wondering where the weekend went. Recently however, I have been immediately cheered by the thought that tomorrow is Tuesday which is the day I meet up with fellow participants and NICHHS team at the South Lake Leisure Centre in Craigavon to go walking.

There can be little doubt as to the benefits of fresh air and exercise. To do this in a beautiful location and in the company of fellow travellers who understand what everyone else in the group has gone through in a way that family and friends, with the best of intentions, cannot, leaves you feeling that you are not unique, not alone. Early on one walker said that she had so enjoyed the walk because up until that point she had lacked the confidence to go out walking on her own, unsure of how she would manage and what would happen if anything went wrong. There is safety in numbers.”

Survivor Story

Craig Shilliday

STROKE



Craig Shilliday, from Portadown, suffered a stroke in March 2019 when on holiday in Toronto, Canada. He and his wife Alison had popped back to their apartment when he noticed weakness in his arms, his face drooped on one side and his speech started to slur.

"I felt perfectly fine and then, without any warning, BANG! I'm lucky that my wife knew straight away what it was," explains Craig.

Alison knew that his symptoms matched the FAST advertisement and rushed Craig to hospital.

Craig later pledged to walk 50km in one week ahead of his 50th birthday to raise money for our work. 50km might not seem much to some, but for stroke-survivor Craig, it was truly a challenge.

"When they say the quicker you act, the more you save, they are right! I was at hospital within 25 minutes and that's why I was even capable of walking this 50km."

Craig was treated in Toronto and upon returning to Northern Ireland was visited at home by Lynn, a member of our Care Team.

"Very early on I wasn't in work, I wasn't allowed to drive, I was enormously frustrated. Lynn signed me up for PREP (Post Rehab Exercise Programme) in Lurgan. In the end, I did it twice! It opened my eyes as to how bad it all could have been."

"PREP put me in touch with others who had been through the same thing. The course was full of good information - it connected the dots. I can still phone or text the NICHS team whenever I need them. They are always on hand with support and advice."

“

The NICHS team taught me how to pace myself, how to manage my symptoms and how to set goals.”

Most of Craig’s symptoms aren’t immediately obvious but they have had a profound impact on this life;

“Physically I recovered quite quickly, in terms of day to day movements. If you saw me on the street, you wouldn’t know I had had a stroke. But the stroke fatigue has been debilitating and I’ve had to build back fitness step by step.”

“I now have a bit of stutter and when I’m tired or stressed, two words just won’t come together. Part of my job used to be writing complex instructions as an ICT service analyst, now I’d be lucky to follow them, never mind write them!”

“The NICHS team taught me how to pace myself, how to manage my symptoms and how to set goals.”

Keen to give something back, Craig organised a walking fundraiser;

“I am so grateful for the support I received from NICHS. With COVID, charities haven’t been able to fundraise to the same extent, so I just thought, “why don’t I help - there’s nothing stopping me.” The challenge also gave me something to focus on, improved my fitness, challenged me and even helped with my mental health.”

Craig adds, “There are stroke survivors that NICHS look after who couldn’t walk 5km, never mind 50km. I walked this for them.”

You can hear Craig tell his inspiring story on our Heart to Heart pod/vodcast series which is available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, the NICHS YouTube channel and our website at nichs.org.uk/hearttoheart

For more information on NICHS stroke services, visit nichs.org.uk/our-support-services/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.

Supporters

DO SOMETHING AMAZING - FUNDRAISE FOR US IN 2022

Did you know that almost 90% of our work is funded by donations from the public?

It's only thanks to your support that we are able to continue being there for the thousands of local people living with chest, heart and stroke conditions who need our support. Your donations also help us keep leading the fight against these illnesses by funding ground-breaking research, life-saving prevention services and our influential campaigning work.

There are so many ways that you can get involved and help us continue the fight. Whether you choose to make a donation or take part in an event, or organise your own fundraiser at work, home or with friends, every little penny will help make a difference to local lives right here in Northern Ireland.



ARE YOU UP FOR A CHALLENGE?

Challenge yourself in 2022 for #TeamNICHS – run, cycle, walk, hike, swim, golf, climb, abseil, skydive – do your thing for NICHS anytime, anywhere!

Find out more and sign up to fundraise for us at nichs.org.uk/events



ORGANISE YOUR OWN FUNDRAISER

If you would like to organise your own unique event to raise funds for our work, you are very welcome to do so! Whether you're a baker, a crafter, a musician or you would prefer to do something more active, there are lots of ways you can get involved.

For more information and to get started, visit nichs.org.uk/fundraiseforus



FUNDRAISE AT WORK

Very few businesses in Northern Ireland are unaffected, whether directly or indirectly, by chest, heart and stroke illness. Partnering with us is a fantastic way to help us carry on our important work whilst showing your company's support for your employees, customers and the wider local community.

To find out more about how your business or organisation can partner with us, visit nichs.org.uk/fundraiseatwork

Your legacy of hope and care - a gift in your Will.

A gift in your Will could not only help your loved ones but can leave a legacy of hope for generations to come.

In Northern Ireland four in ten adult deaths are caused by chest, heart and stroke illnesses. We're working hard to change this by funding life-changing research and caring for those who are affected by devastating health conditions every day.

We've been helping local people for 75 years, and with your help we can continue to be there for people who need us now, as well as those who will need us in the future.

Please visit nichs.org.uk/how-you-can-help/gifts-in-wills for further information on leaving a gift in your Will to NICHS or call us on 028 9032 0184.

**Preventing, Supporting,
Caring and Rebuilding
across Northern Ireland.**

**Chest
Heart &
Stroke**

Almost 90%


of NICHHS's care services and research are funded exclusively by public donations.

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