

LITTLE STARS

Spring Edition 2022

welcome to the first edition of our new look newsletter

Inside:

DARCIE & AMY'S STORIES

Interview with
Darach – CHI
paediatric
neurosurgeon

A salute to our
fabulous fundraisers!

And more...



Children's Health
FOUNDATION

Crumlin • Temple Street • Tallaght • Connolly

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S HEALTH IRELAND

WELCOME!

Thank you for making an amazing difference...

I am delighted to welcome you to the first issue of our brand-new newsletter, *Little Stars*. As a kind supporter, you make so much life-saving work possible, and you will see the impact of your kindness and generosity on every page of this issue.

Every day, in CHI hospitals and urgent care centres, healthcare teams are working – with your help – to give sick children the very best standard of care. They did it for Darcie and Amy, whose stories you will read in these pages. They did it for Josh and his brother Cian. And CHI's world-class frontline teams will keep doing it for every child who needs help.

Please believe me when I say that your support makes all the difference in the world to our healthcare teams and to the children and families we help. You are at the absolute heart of Children's Health Foundation, powering everything that we do for sick children and their families in CHI, and inspiring us to keep going. We're extremely grateful for the trust you have placed in us.

Through the challenges of the pandemic and on into the future, we remain dedicated to doing all we can for sick children and their families. Thank you, from all of us, for your kind support.

Denise Fitzgerald, Chief Executive



CHI'S YOUTH Advisory Council



The Youth Advisory Council (YAC) is a group of dedicated young people who have one thing in common: they're all patients or were previously patients at Children's Health Ireland and have a keen interest in making sure their voices are heard.

As long-time member Grace points out, "*Children do have a voice, and they do have a say in their own healthcare and their own treatment.*" And by speaking up about their experiences, they're helping to improve the care children and young people receive in paediatric hospitals in Ireland.

In addition to feeding into the design and delivery of services in the planned new children's hospital, the YAC are also regularly asked to give feedback on topics as diverse as LGBTQ+ inclusion and the national paediatric nursing strategy.

After meeting over Zoom throughout the pandemic, they're also looking forward to meeting in person again soon, especially considering the shared bond they all have.

These young changemakers are a force to be reckoned with, so watch this space!

Donate online: childrenshealth.ie/donate

TOY STORY



How brave Saoirse's TV appearance inspired amazing generosity from people across Ireland

When eight-year-old Saoirse Ruane told her inspiring story, as part of the Late Late Toy Show Appeal on RTÉ back in November 2020, no-one could have predicted the response.

Saoirse told how she had raised more money than she expected to ensure she has access to prosthetics until she reaches 18, which she needed following a cancer diagnosis, and so she donated the extra money to help other children, including children like her in CHI at Crumlin.

The RTÉ audience responded to her story with overwhelming generosity – over the course of the weekend, more than €6.6 million was raised to help a range of charities across Ireland, including Children's Health Foundation. We were delighted to be able to use the funds

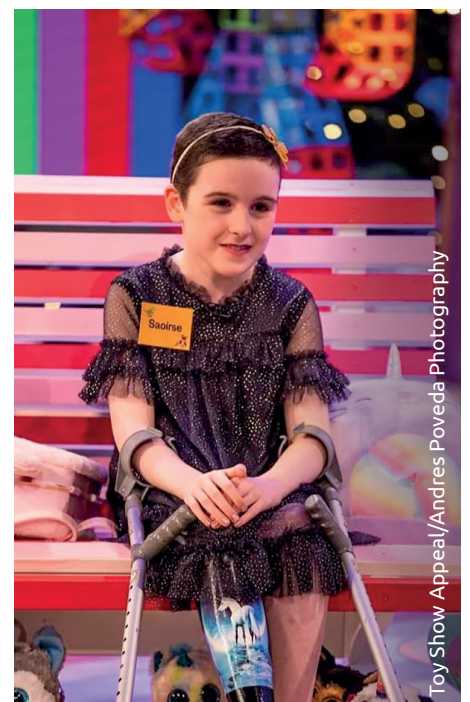
generated by the Toy Appeal to expand CHI's Play Department services, at our centres in Tallaght and Connolly.

Play is hugely important for children receiving medical treatment. It has been shown to have real therapeutic benefits – making children feel more comfortable in the hospital setting and helping them engage with their treatment.

It also brings a bit of joy and laughter into the day. From arts and crafts and face painting to pizza parties and movie nights, the Play Department offers a wide range of fun, diverting and therapeutic events and activities for little ones who really need cheering up.

As Caroline Flynn, Senior Play Specialist puts it, "Your help enables our Play Specialists to

bring fun, laughter and smiles to children and young people at a most difficult time. Thank you for your special gift of joy and laughter, every day."



Toy Show Appeal/Andres Poveda Photography

PATIENT FOCUS

Meet just some of the young people whose lives you've touched with your kindness

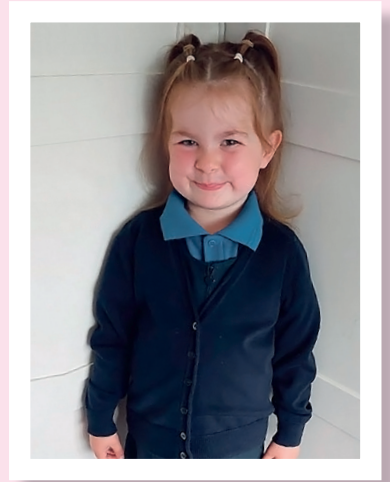


DARCIE

When Darcie's parents took her to their GP, they were shocked to find their daughter had a possible tumour in her abdomen. After ultrasounds at Tallaght Hospital, Darcie was rushed to CHI at Crumlin where she was diagnosed with liver cancer.

Her parents were devastated, but the medical team assured them that it was treatable and had a good survival rate.

A swift treatment plan was put in place, which included six rounds of chemotherapy and a surgery in London. Darcie is now officially cancer free, and is a regular at the Haematology Oncology Out-Patient Service (HOOPS) where they monitor her regularly to check she stays healthy.



"She's handled everything so well." – Lizzie, Darcie's mum



AMY

In February 2019, Amy was at her rowing club when a terrible accident left her critically ill, after nearly drowning. She was rushed to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) in CHI at Temple Street. Scans showed damage to her brain, and doctors predicted a long road to recovery.

Amy spent weeks in a coma, receiving 24-hour care. Our team worked closely with her parents, too, answering their questions and offering reassurance where possible. Amy made a very gradual recovery, but CHI's frontline teams were with her every step of the way. Now she's back at school, walking with a stick, hanging out with friends and loving life!

"We were blessed to have met such a wonderful and dedicated team." – Sharon, Amy's mum

Donate online: childrenshealth.ie/donate

JOSH AND CIAN: THE STORY OF TWO BROTHERS

JOSH

When Josh was just two-years-old, back in 2011, he was diagnosed with hydrocephalus, a serious condition caused by fluid build-up in the brain.

Following his diagnosis, the CHI surgical team acted quickly, operating on Josh and reassuring his worried parents. The surgery was a success, and specialists worked with Josh afterwards, offering him speech therapy, physiotherapy and other forms of recovery support. Now, years later, he's a healthy teenager, a top student and star of his school football team. "We were blessed that it was caught when it was," says his mum, Debbie.

CIAN

Less than a year after Josh had his surgery, his brother Cian was born. Soon after birth he was diagnosed with craniosynostosis, where the bones in the skull join together too early. Cian would also need surgery at the age of just six months, and his was more extensive than Josh's.

His mum Debbie was extremely anxious about her son's condition, but she knew from experience that he was in good hands with CHI surgeons. "We got in there, we kind of knew we were going to be OK," she says. "The doctors were trusted." And sure enough, Cian's surgery was a total success. Today, just like his brother, Cian is a happy and healthy young lad. "The two of them," says Debbie. "There's not a bother on them now."



MEET CHI PAEDIATRIC NEUROSURGEON For Darach Crimmins, every day is literally brain surgery

What kind of patients do you work with?

Paediatric neurosurgery isn't managed anywhere else in the country, so in CHI at Temple Street we get referrals from anywhere – from Letterkenny to Bantry. We might see somebody with brain or spinal malformations, somebody who's had a serious head injury or brain infection, or a child who has just been diagnosed with a brain tumour. We see over 50 new patients with brain tumours a year, most of whom will require surgery.

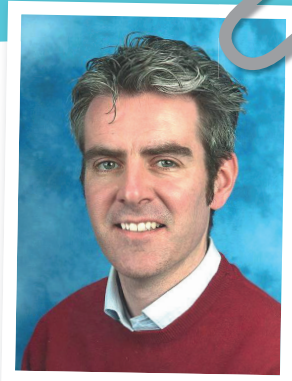
How does Children's Health Foundation funding help you?

The biggest breakthrough for neurosurgery has been having good quality imaging in the operation room. So, we have technology now, which supporters have paid for, that means we can integrate children's scans with the equipment we use in theatre. I can be operating in the middle of the brain and I have scans in front of me showing me exactly where I am. You've also provided us with intraoperative ultrasound which can give us live images of what the brain looks like during surgery (so like google maps and a drone over you giving you a live visual feed).

That must be really beneficial for patients.

It's hugely useful. It's made surgery safer and more effective. It means people need fewer operations – they don't have to come back. It also means that we are less likely to cause harm to vital brain structures during surgery by giving us a better idea where they are!

Thanks to your generosity, dedicated medical staff like Darach can continue their life-saving work, every day.





Anthony was dearly loved by all of his Temple Street friends



LOVING TRIBUTE - ANTHONY IANUCCI

His bright, vivacious spirit touched thousands of lives

We wanted to pay a very special tribute to our dear friend Anthony Iannucci, who sadly passed away in January at the age of fourteen.

As you may already know, Anthony was a life-long patient of CHI at Temple Street, spending a lot of time in and out of the hospital over the years. Anthony was born with Hallermann-Streiff Syndrome – a rare genetic condition that can impact airways, cranial and facial development, and cause other complications.

Anthony was known far and wide for his outgoing personality and wonderful sense of humour. Many will remember him featuring on TV3's Temple Street series when he was just four years old. More recently, Anthony gained fame through his massively popular TikTok channel, which had over 100,000 followers. His dance routines featuring nursing staff from the hospital regularly went viral.

In recent months, Anthony learnt to play the guitar, with the guidance of Music Therapist Alison Sweeney, and even wrote a beautiful song that he recorded in a professional studio. He was the guest of honour at Temple Street's Christmas light-up event in 2021 and his song was played for all to hear. He was also hugely involved in fundraising activities for the hospital.

Anthony was cared for full-time in CHI at Temple Street over the past two years and passed away on 6th January 2022. He was deeply loved by all of his Temple Street friends and will be greatly missed.

Our sincere condolences to his mum Janet, sisters Sandrina and Leanne, wider family and many friends. You are in our thoughts and hearts at this difficult time and have the love and support of your Temple Street family.

Rest in Peace
Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis

OUR FABULOUS FUNDRAISERS!



Eugene O'Leary – The Man with the Pram

79-year-old Eugene O'Leary has been supporting CHI at Crumlin since his daughter Helen was born with a heart condition. Unfortunately, Helen passed away from heart complications. Eugene has taken to the streets with his pram to raise awareness and much-needed funds in Helen's memory. This year, Eugene has taken on the challenge of pushing the pram 10km each day until he reaches his 80th birthday on 9th January 2023!

Dip in the Nip – In for a Penny

Eight-year-old Penny was diagnosed with cancer in 2020. Her family took on a Dip in the Nip in March, and they have raised close to €150k, surpassing the €100k target.



Aoife's Chop

Aoife Treacy decided to cut her beautiful hair to raise essential funds for CHI at Crumlin. At eight years old, Aoife was diagnosed with a very rare tumour. She needed to undergo treatment, including chemotherapy, which meant that she might lose her hair. Aoife had her fundraising haircut before treatment started, although miraculously her chemo hasn't affected her hair, she still has her beautiful short bob!



St Michael's C Ward Skydive

A group of adventurous staff from St Michael's C ward in CHI at Temple Street are taking part in a skydive, to raise money for the Renal Unit. They're bravely taking the leap as they know first-hand the difference fundraising can make to the wards, and to the patients they care for.



A massive THANK YOU, from all of us, to everyone who has helped raise funds for sick children in CHI hospitals and urgent care centres!

If you would like to get involved, or start your own fundraising challenge get in touch with one of the team at communities@childrenshealth.ie.

Donate online: childrenshealth.ie/donate

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT US THIS YEAR

The Great Irish Bake for Sick Children

The Great Irish Bake for Sick Children takes place in April. But don't worry if you haven't registered yet, you can host your bake sale whenever suits you. By signing up, you will be doing something really sweet to support sick children and their families. Register online today at www.childrenshealth.ie/greatirishbake and we will send you a baking kit containing everything you need to make your event a roaring success – including a Great Irish Bake recipe book, bunting, posters and more! Make sure you send us photos of your event; we can't wait to see all your bakes!!



Crumlin and Temple Street Raffle

We want to say a massive thank you to everyone who took part in the Car Raffle for CHI at Crumlin and the Christmas raffle for CHI at Temple Street. You raised over €900,000, which is an incredible achievement. These vital funds will support sick children and their families in CHI at Crumlin and Temple Street. Your support has been phenomenal and continues to change lives each and every day!

Why not join in and play in our next raffle later in the year? Watch this space for details.



Dare to Be Brave for Sick Children

Will you Dare to Be Brave for sick children? Every year, over 350,000 children put on a brave face and receive treatment in CHI hospitals and urgent care centres. This year, be brave and give every sick child the very best chance, by taking part in Children's Health Foundation's Dare to Be Brave adventure series. Team up with friends, workmates or community groups to raise funds to support the life-saving work of CHI hospitals and urgent care centres, all while taking part in fun, exciting and one-in-a-lifetime challenges. The 2022 challenges will begin in April and take place every month until August:

- ★ Jailbreak from Wicklow Gaol (think the Crystal Maze!)
- ★ Land, air, and water assault course
- ★ Abseil from the top of Croke Park's iconic Hogan Stand
- ★ 24 Hour Wilderness Survival
- ★ Skydive

For more information on how to get involved, visit www.childrenshealth.ie/daretobebrave or email daretobebrave@childrenshealth.ie



Donate online:
childrenshealth.ie/donate