



BON SECOURS HEALTH SYSTEM



**COMMUNITY OUTREACH 2024**

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# Bon Secours Health System

## OUR MISSION

Founded by the Sisters of Bon Secours, our hospitals have as their mission, care for the sick, the dying and their families within a Catholic Ethos. Inspired by the Gospel and sharing in the healing mission of Jesus, we recognise the dignity and uniqueness of each person, seeking to provide high-quality holistic care characterised by compassion, respect, justice and hope.

## OUR VISION

Inspired by God's hope for the world, we will be a ministry where staff want to work, clinicians want to practice, people seek wellness and communities thrive.

## OUR VALUES

Bon Secours Health System has 5 Core Values which guide our work and how we deliver our services

- ▶ **Human Dignity**  
We commit to uphold the sacredness of life and to be respectful and inclusive of everyone.
- ▶ **Integrity**  
We commit to act ethically and to model right relationships in all of our individual and organizational encounters.
- ▶ **Compassion**  
We commit to accompany those we serve with mercy and tenderness, recognising that "being with" is as important as "doing for".
- ▶ **Stewardship**  
We commit to promote the responsible use of all human and financial resources, including Earth itself.
- ▶ **Service**  
We commit to provide the highest quality in every dimension of our ministry.

# Introduction

Dear Friends,

Each year, Bon Secours Health System re-commits itself to a simple yet profound Mission: to bring compassion, healing and hope to those who need it most. Our 2024 Community Outreach Report, a Bicentenary Special Edition, is a testament to that Mission in action – a reflection of the lives touched, the partnerships strengthened, and the communities uplifted through our shared efforts.

In a world that continues to face increasing uncertainty and hardship, we have remained steadfast in our support for the vulnerable, the underserved and the poor. With over €700,000 invested in outreach initiatives, we have worked hand-in-hand with local and national charities, community leaders, education partners and our own dedicated staff to respond to real needs with real solutions.

This year's report highlights the breadth and depth of our outreach – from the **Good Help Fund** and **Community Initiative Funding Program** to various other initiatives that extend our reach beyond hospital walls. These efforts are not just about funding – they are about presence, partnership, and purpose. We also felt it appropriate to capture some of the many memorable events and initiatives organized by our staff across the Health System in 2024 to mark 200 years of living the Mission of Bon Secours.

What makes this work truly special is the spirit behind it. Across our Hospitals, Care Village and communities, Bon Secours staff have led with heart – organising, volunteering, and fundraising with remarkable generosity. Their commitment has often been matched by support from the Health System, ensuring that such acts of kindness are amplified.

We are deeply grateful to the many organisations we've partnered with in 2024. Their tireless work inspires us, and we are honoured to support them. We also extend sincere thanks to the Heads of Mission, Hospital Management Teams, and the Good Help Fund Steering Group, whose leadership and care have guided this work with integrity and vision.

As you explore the pages ahead, we hope you are moved by the stories of impact and inspired by the collective effort that makes them possible. Together, we are not only responding to need – we are building a more compassionate and connected world.

With gratitude,



**Alan Sharp**  
Group Chief Executive Officer



**Andrew McCarthy**  
Chief Sponsorship & Mission Officer



## Community Outreach 2024 Bon Secours Hospital Cork

### BSHC Supports Homeless Help and Support Cork



In early 2024, a donation of €10,000 from the BSHC Community Outreach Fund was presented to Mr. John Moynihan in support of the tireless commitment of Homeless Help and Support Cork to those living on the streets of Cork City. These funds were used to purchase essential materials such as trestle tables, coffee dispensers, cooking equipment and other vital furniture and resources. Many thanks to John Moynihan and members of the Board for their warm welcome at their Outreach Food and Clothing Service on St. Patrick Street in March.

### Green Week at BSHC



In an effort to promote awareness among staff of the importance of biodiversity in our gardens and local areas, we invited Maria Young from Greenspaces Cork, to share her knowledge of all things “green” with BSHC staff at our Biodiversity stand in March. Over 800 gift packs of Native Irish Wildflower Seed Bombs were purchased from the Community Outreach Fund and distributed to staff who pledged to plant and nurture a wildflower patch in their gardens!



### Support for Mayfield Men's Shed



Established in 2017, Mayfield Men's Shed has emerged as one of the most vibrant and dynamic focal points in the local community. Its mission revolves around community, well-being, and practical activity for men, fostering a sense of belonging and purpose. The Mayfield Men's Shed is a voluntary organisation, providing men with a place for social interaction as well as maintenance of skills in arts, crafts, and other talents that may not be fully realised without such a facility. BSHC was delighted to provide a grant of €1,000 in 2024 for the provision of a much needed wood turner.

### Grant from BSHC Community Outreach Fund for Cork Sexual Violence Centre



Established on International Women's Day in 1983, the Centre has been providing a broad range of support services to victims of sexual violence in Cork City and County for almost 4 decades. Situated in the heart of the city, Cork Sexual Violence Centre works towards the elimination of sexual violence in society and provides the highest quality of services to victims of sexual violence.

A grant of €40,000 from the Cork Hospital Community Outreach Fund in 2024 allowed the Centre's Board of Directors to immediately carry out urgent structural repairs due to subsidence in the basement of the Camden Street premises. This will ensure that the building remains safe and that crucial services and support may continue uninterrupted.

### Tabor Group Launches Bon Secours Hospital Cork Sponsored 'Tús Maith' Addiction Support Project



Thanks to a grant of €42,000 from BSHC Community Outreach Fund and the Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours, Tabor Group was delighted to launch a 12-month pilot Pre-Treatment Programme called 'Tús Maith' beginning in March 2025. The project aims at providing a range of one to one and group supports and will bridge the gap between the initial assessment and actual admission to Tabor's residential treatment programmes. At present, Tabor Fellowship offers a 28 day residential programme or a 3 month residential programme for people with more complex addiction issues. 'Tús Maith' is an important and innovative initiative which will go far in ensuring that those who have the initial courage to reach out for support will now have a greater chance of persevering towards healing and recovery.

## BSHC Supports Zambesi Sunrise Trust



€2,000

Zambesi Sunrise Trust works to provide education and safety for children in a very poverty stricken area just outside Livingstone in Zambia.

In 2024, BSHC was delighted to support this Charity with a donation of €2,000 from our Community Outreach Fund to match the €2,000 raised at a staff cake sale in the hospital.

## BSHC Supports The Lantern Project at Nano Nagle Centre



€4,700

The Lantern at Nano Nagle Centre Cork has two main strands of work – community development and community education. All programmes are designed to be inclusive, accessible, relevant and most importantly – participant led. Time spent attending Lantern activities allows people to take small steps, make new connections whilst reflecting on what supports their well-being. Thanks to a grant of €4,700 in early 2024 from BSHC for a 10 week creative writing module at Nano Nagle Centre, a book of short stories entitled "I Am a Storyteller" and illustrated by William Crowley, was launched recently by the Lord Mayor of Cork in St Peter's on North Main Street.

## BSHC Grant for St. Alphonsa Palliative Care Clinic, Murickassery, Kerala



€4,000

Under the direction of Sr. (Dr) Lincy Mathew, St. Alphonsa Palliative Care Clinic in Kerala, India provides specialized care for individuals with life-limiting illnesses. Palliative care focuses on improving quality of life by managing symptoms and addressing the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs of patients and their families. Many of our nurses at BSHC are natives of Kerala. Some have even worked at the Centre before travelling abroad. We were therefore delighted to support the Centre with a donation of €4,000 towards palliative care syringe drivers.



## Bon Secours Hospital Cork - Respite Initiative 2024



Thanks to the kindness and generosity of so many of our staff, and in particular to the staff of St Patrick's Ward, the 2024 Respite Group returned home to their families refreshed, renewed and extremely relaxed. They had a packed two weeks of fun and very lively entertainments! The 2024 programme was enriched with many new volunteers as well as our old reliable who regaled our guests with their wonderful music, song, dance, poetry, bingo, newspaper readings, physio exercise sessions, quiz and most important of all, the warmth of their friendship and company!





## Community Outreach 2024 Bon Secours Hospital Dublin

### Good Help Fund

In 2024, the Good Help Fund donated €78,000 towards surgeries for six young adults aged from 17-19. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and other challenges, these six candidates had not been able to receive timely access to surgery, over several years.

Mr Conor Bowe, Consultant Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeon, and Mr John Ed O'Connell, Consultant Maxillofacial Surgeon, noted that these surgeries "will lead to marked improvements in the quality of life for these young adults. We are very appreciative of the Bon Secours Good Help Fund for facilitating these worthwhile surgeries in 2024. They will be of life changing value to the selected patients and will allow them a brighter, healthier future."



L to R: John Coughlan, Head of Mission, Mr John Ed O'Connell, Consultant Maxillofacial Surgeon, and Mr Conor Bowe, Consultant Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeon

### Sisters of the Holy Rosary, Malawi – Construction of a Septic Tank at a Health Clinic



€10,000

Chigwere village is 22kms outside Muzu and is accessible only via a dirt road. The Sisters of the Holy Rosary, whose mission is to provide education and medical care to the sick, orphaned children, and the economically poor, commenced building a health clinic in the village with funds received from their fundraising efforts.

The clinic will provide space to care for patients who are suffering from severe disease, as well as a small pharmacy, maternity unit with delivery suite, and children's treatment area. A key piece of infrastructure enabling the progress of the building project was the installation of a septic tank. The donation from BSHD made that possible and the tank was built over May and June of 2024.

When the clinic is fully operational it will provide critical health services in a locality that otherwise has no access to any health care, improving both the quality and the life expectancy of the local community.

### Community Connect Support – Baby Care Packs



€2,000

Community Connect Support is a charity that helps pregnant mothers and parents with new babies and young children who are in need. The organisation was registered as a charity in 2023 and maintains hubs in Dublin, Galway, Kilkenny, and Athlone from where it provides its support services.

The hubs are run by volunteers who accept donated items which are then sorted and redistributed to families in need. Community Connect Support collaborates with other agencies supporting families, and they also work directly with various maternity hospitals across Ireland. With the donation from BSHD, Community Connect Support will purchase items for the care packs that are given specifically for the care of new-born babies in Dublin.

Many of the beneficiaries will be babies born to refugee parents who others who are in emergency accommodation. The CEO of Community Connect Support, Elaine Noonan and her colleague, Lydia O'Reilly came to BSHD to meet Sharon Morrow, Hospital CEO and Alan Burke, Head of Mission.

 We rise by lifting others  
– Robert Ingersoll

### Little Blue Heroes Foundation – Sarah's Christmas Gift Programme



Little Blue Heroes Foundation is an organization whose mission is to provide practical and financial support to families of children who have serious illness. In addition, they grant the wish of children to become Honorary Gardaí. The Foundation is supported by service and retired members of An Garda Síochána who donate their time voluntarily. "Sarah's Christmas Gift" is an annual aid programme delivered in memory of Sarah Robinson.

The Christmas gift packages that are provided to families include vouchers for fuel and food. They are delivered in early December by Community Gardaí all over Ireland who act as buddies to the children who are the Little Blue Heroes. Our donation will provide for the purchase of food vouchers that form part of Sarah's Christmas Gift.

Retired Garda Karl Franz Heller, who is the Chairperson of the Little Blue heroes Foundation, accepted the donation from Sharon Morrow, Hospital CEO and Alan Burke, Head of Mission.

 Ar scáth a Chéile a mhaireann na daoine  
– Old Irish Proverb

### Shankill and Ballybrack Community First Responders – Community AED devices



€3,450

The Shankill and Ballybrack Community First Responders provide approximately 200 hours of volunteer rapid response to 30 calls per month in their area. In 2023 they responded to 50% of all cardiac arrest incidents in their area which serves a population based of approximately 30,000 people.

Attending to critical emergencies such as cardiac arrest, heart attack, and stroke, Automated External Defibrillators (AED's) are an essential piece of life-saving equipment used by first responders. In many instances, they make the difference between life and death. The funding provided by BSHD will purchase three new AED devices that will be placed strategically in locations within the community.

Training in the life-saving use of these AED's is provided to members of the public and in 2023 Shanakill and Ballybrack Community First responders delivered 35 training events to 500 people.

### Third Age Ireland – Age Well Companion Service



In 1988, Third Age was established as a voluntary organisation supporting older people in Co Meath. Since then, they have expanded to various other parts of Ireland with the aim of empowering older individuals to live well. The Age Well Companion service is a Third Age initiative whereby volunteer companions conduct weekly visits, wellbeing evaluations, and health assessments with their older adult clients.

These visits combat social exclusion and help older individuals to maintain a connection to their local community and its services. The visits also promote a sense of wellbeing by reducing loneliness and the early identification of health-related concerns before they escalate. The donation from BSHD will be used to source and onboard 6 new volunteer companions who will go on to deliver 540 hours of companion service to older individuals in their own homes.



€6,000

### Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes – BSHD Nurses as Volunteer Carers



€7,800

As a special initiative during the Bon Secours bicentenary year, BSHD fully funded the cost of two of our own nurses to be volunteer carers on the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes (September 2024).

The Hospital Management Team felt that this would be an appropriate initiative, forming part of our celebration of the bicentenary of the foundation of the Bon Secours Congregation. The BSHD nurses were Teresa Brady and Sunitha Rajesh.



## Focus Ireland – Christmas Donation



€3,000



Sr Stanislaus Kennedy founded Focus Ireland following her research into the needs of women experiencing homelessness in Dublin in the 1980s.

Through her research, Sr Stan realised the importance of involving people who are homeless, or have been directly affected by homelessness, in the development of homelessness services.

Since its foundation, Focus Ireland's services have continued to grow and our research and advocacy work ensures that the rights of people who are homeless remain on the political agenda. In addition to our Dublin projects, we now have services and housing projects across Ireland including in Waterford, Kilkenny, Cork, Sligo and Limerick.

## Crosscare – Christmas Donation



€3,000

Crosscare was founded in 1941. That year, a wide range of social service initiatives of the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Dublin were brought together under the name "Catholic Social Service Conference" (CSSC).

Crosscare has expanded and evolved over 80 years always striving to identify and support people most in need in our communities. The ability to adjust to changing circumstances and emerging needs is a key of characteristic of Crosscare since its foundation.

As economic and social pressures change and impact on different groups of people, Crosscare continues to adapt to ensure that those who find themselves on the margins of our society at any given time are helped and supported.

## Capuchin Day Centre – Christmas Donation



€3,000

Founded in 1969 by Capuchin friar, Brother Kevin Crowley, and inspired by the spirit of St Francis Assisi, the Centre was set up to 'relieve the hardship endured by homeless people.'

Situated in Bow Street, Dublin 7, the Day Centre started out providing meals for the homeless in Dublin and has developed its services over the years to meet the presenting needs of those who come seeking food and support.

From hot meals, food parcels, showering facilities and clothing to medical, optical, dental and family services, the Capuchin Day Centre is committed to providing practical, meaningful support to those who seek help.

## Laura Lynn Foundation Christmas Donation



€2,000

LauraLynn is Ireland's only Children's Hospice providing palliative and hospice care and support for children with life-limiting conditions and their families from all across Ireland. LauraLynn, provides a range of services including, symptom management for children, music and play therapy, psychological support, family and sibling camps, short breaks, Crisis Care and End of Life Care.

Care can be availed of in our specialised hospice in Leopardstown, at hospital, in the community, or in the family home, depending on the location and medical needs of the child and the family's preference.

We share our love through acts of service  
– Anonymous

Life's most persistent and urgent question is:  
What are you doing for others?

– Martin Luther King

## Pieta House – Christmas Donation

€2,000

Pieta first opened its doors in Lucan, County Dublin in 2006. Since then they have seen and helped over 70,000 people in suicidal distress or engaging in self-harm.

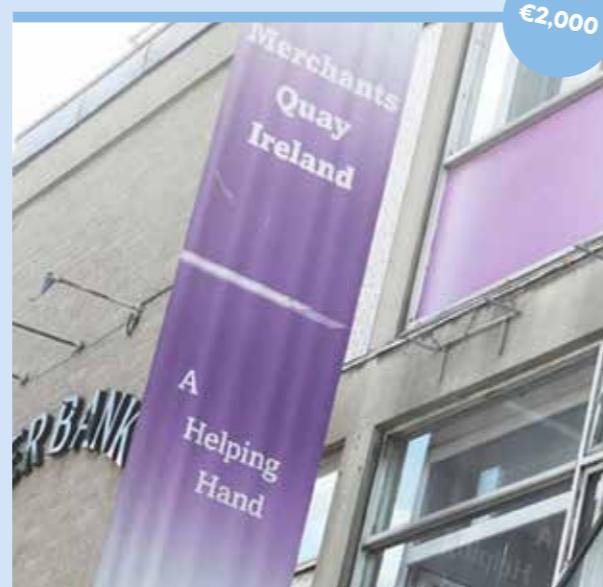
They now operate 20 locations across Ireland, employing over 300 therapists and support staff with demand for the service increasing.

Pieta offers a free professional one-to-one, in-person, phone or video therapeutic counselling and 24-hour phone and text crisis prevention services to those who are in suicidal crisis. Every week, Pieta therapists deliver almost 1,000 hours of therapy to people across Ireland.



## Merchant's Quay – Christmas Donation

€2,000



With roots in the Franciscan communities that have a centuries old presence on the south side of Dublin's River Liffey, Merchants Quay Ireland provides services to people experiencing homelessness and/or addiction.

They offer food, advice, health care, mental health support and addiction services in a non-judgemental and compassionate way. This included almost 67,000 hot meals, 4,500 hot showers, and over 13,500 clients helped.

  Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness 

– Desmond Tutu

## Samaritans – Christmas Donation

€2,000

Samaritans is the only charity in Ireland offering emotional support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to anyone who is in distress, lonely, struggling to cope or feeling suicidal.

Supporting people in Ireland since 1961, its volunteers have had millions of potentially life-saving conversations with callers through its freephone phone helpline, email, face-to-face support and outreach in communities, schools, festivals and prisons.

Samaritans has 24 locations across Ireland and Northern Ireland, which are run independently by a network of volunteers.



## Malawi Orphanage – Christmas Donation

€2,000

During their visit to Malawi in September 2024, Mary Stenson, Alan Burke, and Sharon Morrow visited Mzuzu Orphanage to deliver clothes and toys donated by friends and family in Ireland.

While there, they discovered that Baby Formula is a need that the orphanage regularly has because of its high cost in Malawi. On returning to Ireland, the group suggested that the orphanage be selected as the charity to be supported from the annual Christmas Market donations and the Community Initiative Fund to provide baby formula for the orphanage. The generous donations of staff and visitors ensured that BSHD provided a year's worth of Baby Formula to the Mzuzu Orphanage.





## Community Outreach 2024

# Bon Secours Hospital Galway

### Galway Chamber Choir



€750

The Choir, renowned locally for its strong commitment to community engagement, has featured on Irish television. It began in 2016 as a Youth Choir in the parish of Salthill. Now led by Stephen Carroll it has broadened its reach and range. Members of the Hospital staff community sing with the Choir. This donation was made to support the Choir's tour of Japan, during which performances and cultural exchange events were scheduled.

### Sea Scouts



€2,000

Galway Sea Scouts is a volunteer led youth development charity providing personal development from age 6 to 18 through and adventure and ocean-based program. With a focus on inclusion and diversity they aim to build skills such as leadership, teamwork and resilience that will serve the children as they progress through life.

Sailing is a core element of their youth development program and provides a non-competitive way for children of mixed abilities to work together on a shared enterprise, with some level of challenge. In 2024 we start a "Big Brother/Big Sister" mentor program, where our teenage and young adult members gain leadership skills by coaching younger members or those who have never had an opportunity to participate in adventure activities due to disadvantage. This programme takes place on 'Dead Man's Beach' in Renmore – a short walk from Bon Secours Galway.

With some of our staff's families involved in this project, Bon Secours Galway was delighted to support this venture in our locality.

### Galway Hospice – Croagh Patrick Climb



€4,225

Bon Secours Galway were delighted to be the key sponsor of the annual Galway Hospice Croagh Patrick Climb in 2024. Thirteen members of the Hospital staff community participated in a fundraising climb of Croagh Patrick organised by Galway Hospice. This event is one of the principal annual fundraising events for services offered by the Hospice, such as the night nurse service. At the summit, members of the Bon Secours Team participated in a brief prayer service in memory of those who had died in the past year.

### Parkinson's Ireland



We were delighted to support one of our HCA's who organised a charity event for the Galway branch of Parkinson's Ireland. Coming from her own family experience, she has been a guiding force in raising awareness and support locally for those with Parkinsons.

### Independent Hand Unit Project



One of our consultants, Mr. Michael O'Sullivan, is involved in a five year project to establish an independent Hand Unit in Lilongwe, Malawi. The need is great. There are only 10 orthopaedic surgeons in the country. Mr. O'Sullivan will spend two 4 week terms in the country performing surgeries and teaching doctors at interim, resident and fellowship level. He became involved in this work through his membership of the British Association for Surgery of the Hand. We are delighted to support this worthy and important work and wish Mr. O'Sullivan well as he offers his years of expertise to those in the greatest need.

### MSF (Gaza)



With the year dominated by coverage of the humanitarian crisis enveloping the people of Gaza, and the destruction of so much health care provision, an initiative from staff members raised some funds for Médecins Sans Frontières / Doctors Without Borders (MSF) which the hospital supported.



## Blue Teapot Theatre Company



€1,500

BSHG was delighted to support this arts accessibility project run by the Blue Teapot Theatre Company. The Company evolved from within a community arts project under the auspices of the Brothers of Charity Services. They are now an award winning independent theatre company telling stories through the lens of disability, challenging perceptions and assumptions about ability. Since 1996 they have delivered inclusive arts projects, education and outreach programmes, and community theatre events. This donation, presented to Jane Parsons, Executive Director of Blue Teapot Theatre Company, will be used to support the performing arts school initiatives, the ambition of which aligns very closely to the Hospital's commitment to promoting inclusivity.

## West of Ireland Beginning Experience

€2,000

This charity is a peer grief support ministry for those who are bereaved, widowed or separated or have experienced loss of a long term love relationship. The object of the group is to help people navigate their way through their grief journey so that they can move forward in life and learn to love themselves, others and God. They run residential retreats and training days. We are delighted to support this group and that some of our own staff have found it to be life giving and affirming.

## Helplink/Galway Family Doctors

€3,000

### Galway Family Doctors Counselling Programme

€3,000

This initiative was in partnership with our neighbours in Mervue, Galway Family Doctors. They service particularly underprivileged client base on our community with great respect and dignity. As part of our Good Help programme, we have been able to offer diagnostic services that have been hugely beneficial to individuals over the years.

We have also had a long relationship with Helplink, a counselling service both online and in person, here in Galway that has grown substantially. As we reviewed both projects, we found that there was a significant need for personal support among those being met at the GP practice.

With this donation, patients in a busy city general practice could avail of six sessions of counselling to help with personal issues. The GP practice used its discretion to offer this support to patients who were learning to live with addiction, grief, or other issues affecting their lives.

## COPE Galway

€500

We were happy to support a fundraising dinner for our friends at COPE Galway, which included a very inspiring talk from adventurer and motivational speaker, Karen Weekes. COPE celebrate 60 years of service to those who experience homelessness and deprivation in Galway.

## Quest Brain Injury

€750

One of our well loved nurses lost her husband recently and has in his memory organised walks in his honour to support the Quest Brain Injury unit in University Hospital Galway.

This has now become an annual walk which our staff support.

## Hand In Hand

€3,000

Hand in Hand offers a range of practical and emotional support services to families affected by a childhood cancer diagnosis nationwide. Practical support services are available to families during the child's active treatment. Emotional support services are available to families during the child's treatment and up to one year post treatment, or two years in the case of bereavement support.

Bon Secours Galway has supported a number of projects by this charity. This funding supports Hand in Hand to continue to offer services such as household cleaning, laundry services and particularly family meal delivery, which are vital for maintaining daily routines during challenging times.

## Club S

We were delighted to support a Youth Group that serves people in the Westside/Shatalla area of Galway city. They were working on their production of TEN, a variety show that is being staged at the Town Hall Theatre in Galway. They cater for children between 8 and 18, and work predominately through music and drama, the highlight of which is the staging of their variety show.

## Croi Night Run



More than 150 BSHG Staff participated in the annual night run along the promenade in Salthill in aid of Croi, the Galway based organisation that is working to prevent heart disease and stroke.

It is a very popular event in the Galway calendar and the donation from Bon Secours will go towards Croi's education and outreach programmes. It is a wonderful way to support a local charity and a great way of enjoying the Prom and have a fun time with our colleagues and many others in the local community.

## Pieta



Bon Secours Galway were delighted, along with other Bon Secours facilities, to support the registration of our staff members in the annual Darkness into Light walk raising awareness of suicide prevention in our communities.

## Harvest Food Collection



In October, an opportunity for staff to donate items to a Harvest Food Collection was offered. Over a three-week period, staff could leave items such as tea, coffee, pasta, rice, cereals, etc in a collection box in the Hospital Restaurant. When the collection concluded, the items were delivered to the nearby Sonas Centre, which is a support service for elderly in the community. The Sonas Centre brings people together for meals and social interaction.



I was hungry and you gave me to eat



– Mt 25: 35

## Bon Secours Bicentenary Cycle



As part of the celebrations marking the bicentenary of the foundation of the Sisters of Bon Secours, Sean Duignan – a member of staff in BSHG – undertook a 1000km cycle around Ireland, visiting each of the Bon Secours facilities. He undertook the cycle to raise funds for the Irish Cancer Society. Bon Secours Hospital Galway kickstarted the fundraiser with a donation of €1500, and Donal O Neill, Head of Mission and Colin Connolly, Facilities Manager accompanied Sean in a support van. By the end of the cycle, Sean had raised €23,500.



**“Creation’s Dance”** by the Irish artist, Laura O’Hagan, was commissioned in 2024 to commemorate the Bicentenary of the foundation of the Sisters of Bon Secours in Paris France. This beautiful artwork now adorns the entrance area of Bon Secours Care Village



## Community Outreach 2024

# Bon Secours Hospital Limerick

## Down Syndrome Limerick



Down Syndrome Limerick is a charity, which provides services and supports to people with Down Syndrome. Services are provided at their base in Castletroy, as well as at a satellite clinic in Newcastle West. As a charity, without any

government funding, Down Syndrome Limerick relies on the generosity of businesses and individuals to support us through donations and fundraisers. One of their big fundraisers every year is a 4-day, 600km cycle called the Tour de Munster, now in its 24th year. The participating cyclists spend a gruelling 4 days on the bikes travelling through the 6 counties of Munster. Cycling legend, Seán Kelly, is an integral part of the Tour, which was officially launched at Limerick's Plassey House, on Monday, 24th June. Since 2000, the Tour de Munster has raised €5 million for the Munster branches of DSI.

The Community Initiative Funding will remain locally in the branch so that members benefit directly from our support. Down Syndrome Limerick is run by parents and family members of children with Down syndrome on a voluntary basis. They have over 150 members of all ages availing of services at its branch. They provide counselling and other essential services such as Speech

and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy. They provide school support to parents and teachers of children throughout their education journey. They run a successful adult education programme, which provides adults with Down syndrome with the skills to gain meaningful employment. They also have a proactive employment programme and work with employers in the region to secure jobs for adults with Down syndrome. They also run many social activities for members like drama, art, swim and cycling lessons.

## Engage in Education



Engage in Education represents a unique collaboration between students, parents, community agencies, and education providers at Primary, Post Primary, Further and Higher Education levels. The Engage model is one of 'engaged communities' that proactively address the educational support needs of young people and parents who are experiencing socio-economic disadvantage through a partnership approach that supports the realising of aspirations, fosters community and family resilience, and contributes toward increased progression and access to further and higher education among those who were previously precluded from it.

Engage in Education is designed to increase access to education in designated communities in Limerick City by supporting young people and families to overcome social, economic, cultural, and psychological barriers that prevent

educational progression and social exclusion by: 1. Enhancing a continuum of supports that foster equality and inclusion in Primary, Post Primary and third-level education. 2. Adopting a student and family-centred approach, focused on strengths. 3. Providing information, encouragement, financial and emotional support to empower students and their families to advance through all levels of the education system. These are achieved through the provision of three flagship programmes:

1. The Nurture Programme- a 4-year primary/ Junior cycle programme starting in the 6th class to 3rd Year (200 students).
2. The Compass Programme-a 3-year Senior cycle/further education programme (100 students) and
3. The Engage Programme- a 4-year undergraduate programme (80 students).

The project was established in a partnership between St Enda's Post Primary school on the Southside of Limerick, which brought together a dedicated board of voluntary directors in 1991, with Atlantic Philanthropies who provided initial funding. The project was established in response to a deep backdrop of socio-economic disadvantage in Southill and significantly lower rates of access and participation in third-level education compared to national norms. Originally based in St Enda's school with a focus on supporting access to 3rd level education among those living in Southill. In 2003 the project moved to the Limerick Enterprise Development Park. At the request of local bodies, the project extended their remit across the city to include the communities of Moyross, Ballinacurra Weston, St Mary's Park together with Southill. Engage in Education is innovative in terms of its programme design, and the dual community-oriented and in-school approaches it deploys.

Embedded in Engage in Education's ethos are collaborative and meaningful partnerships and community-driven supports and programmes. The Engage in Education theory of change assumes that meaningful student, parent, and community

partnerships, together with community-based and in-school supports will positively contribute to addressing social and educational disadvantage by increasing levels of post-secondary school progression to further and higher education in a way that empowers students to effect changes within their own lives, the lives of their families and local communities



### Pieta House



Pieta first opened its doors in Lucan, County Dublin in 2006. Since then, it has seen and helped over 70,000 people in suicidal distress or engaging in self-harm. Pieta now operates 20 locations across Ireland and employs over 300 therapists and support staff, and the demand for our service is increasing.

Annually, Pieta delivers approximately 50,000 hours of intervention and bereavement counselling. They receive approximately 100,000 crisis support calls and texts through our 24 freephone helpline and they directly support approximately 700 households devastated by the loss of a loved one by suicide. Everything is free of charge and their

staff are fully qualified, providing a professional one-to-one therapeutic service for people who are experiencing suicidal ideation, people who have attempted suicide and people who are engaging in self-harm. A doctor's referral or a psychiatric report is not required.

Pieta's three main pillars of practice are prevention, intervention, and postvention.

- ▶ Pieta's prevention services include The Resilience Academy and the Amber Flag. These are awareness driving initiatives to instil and empower young people with coping mechanisms to prevent them potentially incurring suicidal or self-harm thoughts in the future.
- ▶ Pieta's intervention model is our suicidal ideation and self-harm counselling therapy. Through up to twelve sessions of free counselling, our strengths-based, solution-focused method aims to nurture resilience and collaboratively develop effective coping strategies with our clients.
- ▶ Postvention practice is our Suicide Bereavement service. We provide free counselling, therapy and support to those who have been bereaved by suicide. This service provides Suicide Bereavement Liaison Officers within 8 weeks of a death by suicide, and Suicide Bereavement Counselling from 8 weeks on.

The hospital community at BSHLaB wanted to sincerely acknowledge the valued work of Pieta House in the community on so many levels. €2,000 in Community Initiative Funding was donated, in addition to the fundraising efforts of our staff who raised €1,391 through a Table Quiz and Easter Raffle.

"On behalf of our clients and everyone in Pieta, I would like to thank you sincerely for your very kind and wonderful support in helping us to continue our lifesaving work. We gratefully acknowledge your very generous donation following your

recent Table Quiz and Easter Raffle. Your support allows Pieta to provide free services to people in crisis. Pieta also provides a 24-hour Freephone Crisis Helpline and Text service, and our Suicide Bereavement Liaison Officers (SBLO's) provide support to families who have been bereaved. 85% of Pieta's income is received through fundraisers and donations, support from people like you is vital to us. You make our life-saving counselling services possible. Through your kindness and generosity, you are ensuring that we can continue helping those in crisis" Caitriona O'Mahony, Community Fundraising Officer Munster Region.

### Irish Cancer Society



€1,000

The Irish Cancer Society is a community of patients, survivors, volunteers, supporters, health and social care professionals and researchers. Together, they are working to save lives and improve the lives of people affected by cancer in Ireland. They listen to patients and their loved ones and support them by providing free information and care. They fund cancer research to find better treatments that will save more lives. They work to keep cancer on the Government's agenda, to make sure the Irish healthcare system functions as well as possible to help cancer patients and their loved ones through their diagnosis.

In addition to the donations of staff and consultants to the Irish Cancer Society, the BSHLaB hospital community was delighted to support our colleague Sean Duignan in BSHG as he undertook the Bicentenary Charity Cycle covering 1000 kilometres and linking all our Bon Secours Facilities in just three days! He made a short visit to our hospital at Barringtons and the site of our new hospital at Ballysimon on Thursday, 30th May. This epic journey celebrated 200 years of Good Help (Bicentenary of the Sisters of Bon Secours) and raised funds for the Irish Cancer Society.



## Good Help Fund Orthopaedic and Ophthalmology Initiatives



Back Row L- R: Eric O'Donoghue HCA, Chloe O'Toole CNM2, Audrey Morrissey Staff Nurse, Tom Coughlan HCA, Johanna Kelly CNM2. Front Row L – R: Margaret Lyons Keogh Staff Nurse, Kesiah Maglaque Staff Nurse, Tracey McElligott CNM3, Aisling Daly CNM2.

Following consultation with key stakeholders, and the approval of our Hospital Management Team, we offered our referring GPs the opportunity to refer a total of 4 GMS orthopaedic patients and 9 GMS ophthalmology patients, of good baseline health status, who have been on the public waiting list for a cataract or a joint-replacement procedure for an inordinate length of time, free of charge.

We, as a hospital community, are always keen to build on the Bon Secours legacy of care that we have inherited and are privileged to continue. We are committed to provide services to a population we don't normally serve, where there clearly is a need. We are committed to provide the service in our facilities, driven by our values, to our quality standards. We are keen to focus on what we can bring to the table – our existing capability and expertise i.e., doing what we are good at.

This initiative sought to build on the success of the 2022 and 2023 Good Help Fund Initiatives and to have a positive impact on the long waiting lists in the HSE. Fundamentally, it sought to provide a model to contribute towards addressing healthcare inequity in the communities, driven by our core values, to our quality standards, utilising the skills and services that we are proud of.

The outcomes of this Initiative were as follows:

1. We responded as best we could, as a hospital community, to the purpose of the Good Help Fund, which is to build on the Bon Secours legacy of care that we have inherited.
2. 5 x Joint Replacement procedures were completed in total, two of which were funded for half of the cost of the surgery. 10 x Cataract Procedures were completed in total, with three patients requiring second cataracts. With remaining funding 2 TP Biopsies were completed.
3. We had accepted other patients who did not proceed to surgery for one reason or another including 2 patients for cataracts, 1 patient for Joint replacement and 2 patients for TP Biopsies.
4. We treated referred patients, who had been on orthopaedic, and ophthalmology waiting lists for an inordinate length of time and made a significant impact on their quality-of-life post procedure and that of their respective families and carers.
5. We enhanced the awareness and engagement among our GPs of the rationale behind and the value of the Good Help Fund.
6. We contributed towards addressing healthcare inequity in the communities we serve by directly providing services for those who are most in need.
7. Patient Feedback was very positive.



Mr Pathma Ramasamy, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon and Retinal Specialist.

Dr Siobhan Grimes, Consultant Anaesthetist and Clinical Director.

Professor Eric Masterson, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon.

Mandy Duggan, Patient Access Manager



Sandra Ryan HCA, Mary Donoher Staff Nurse, Ide Kenneally Staff Nurse, Mary Caples-Ryan Staff Nurse, Rachel Walsh Staff Nurse, Susan Roche CNM2, Helen Power Staff Nurse, Suzanne Casey HCA.

 We commit to provide the highest quality in  every dimension of our ministry

– Bon Secours Core Value of Service

## Support for Irish Heart Foundation

In 2024, fourteen women including Sarah O'Sullivan, Bon Secours Limerick, completed a gruelling, week-long Arctic Challenge to increase awareness of the risk of heart disease and stroke in women.

The all-female expedition, raising funds for the Irish Heart Foundation, saw participants travel 350 km north of the Arctic Circle, complete a hauling trek across a frozen lake and an overnight, outdoor sleep in temperatures of -20C.

The women left Dublin for Kilpisjärvi, Northern Finland on March 13th and for some, it was a personal journey to highlight the importance of heart health after loved ones suffered serious cardiac issues.

Research commissioned by the Irish Heart Foundation last year showed that only half of women in Ireland recognise the symptoms of heart attack and stroke.

“Society needs to confront this embedded myth that heart disease is a male disease; it is still not seen as a disease that affects women to the degree that it does,” said consultant cardiologist and Irish Heart Foundation Medical Director, Dr Angie Brown.

“Women need to seek help earlier if they have any suspicion something might be wrong, advocate for themselves, recognise the signs and potentially save their own lives.”

The team fundraised over €130,000 for the Irish Heart Foundation, and particularly noted Bon Secours Health System for kindly donating to the cause through the Community Initiative Fund.





## Community Outreach 2024

# Bon Secours Hospital Tralee

### Team Project CE Drug Rehabilitation Programme



The main objective of the TEAM project CE Drug Rehabilitation programme is to support and assist participants in recovery from addiction in gaining access to training and education enabling them to participate fully in community and working life. The programme bases its activities on a holistic approach, providing a broad range of training and activities which cater for the well-being, mental, physical and social health of members. Working with each participant individually while also as a group allows us the opportunity to support them

while they progress in their recovery and back into the community. These funds have made a significant contribution to the project as outlined below.

The €2000 was divided among 4 participants on TEAM Project as follows:

**Participant 1:** €600 was spent on practical driving lessons with a certified instructor to help the participant attain her full driving licence.

**Participant 2:** €350 was spent on practical driving lessons with a certified instructor to help the participant attain his full driving licence.

Obtaining their full driving licence was part of their progression and included the following benefits:

- ▶ Access to supports and services
- ▶ Freedom to drive and explore the country
- ▶ No need for an accompanied driver once full licence obtained
- ▶ Lower Insurance premium
- ▶ Greater job opportunities

- ▶ Wider scope for accessing rented accommodation
- ▶ Increase confidence

**Participant 3:** €550 went towards a SHEP Certificate in Personal Development course. This is part one of the SHEP Foundation Programme. Part 2 is the SHEP Certificate in Social Awareness and Community Empowerment. This course aims to allow learners to grow awareness on a journey of self-discovery and learn about how they relate to themselves, and to others. It's a place to explore life, choices, responsibilities while offering a place to increase self-confidence and well-being.

**Participant 4:** €500 was allocated towards a counselling and psychotherapy training course. This course is aimed at developing skills and qualifications in counselling and psychotherapy, providing essential knowledge in areas like:

- ▶ Mental health counselling techniques
- ▶ Psychotherapy practices and approaches
- ▶ Client relationship building
- ▶ Emotional well-being and trauma management
- ▶ Ethics and professional conduct in therapy

A significant number of TEAM Project participants have successfully completed QQI-accredited courses across various sectors. Notably, Social Care and Mental Health have been the most frequently chosen areas of study, highlighting a strong commitment among participants to give back and support others on similar recovery journeys.

As part of Recovery Month in September 2024, the Southern Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force invited the TEAM Project to contribute to a regional event celebrating recovery. In response, the TEAM participants developed a promotional poster and coordinated the catering for the event, which was held in Ballybunion, County Kerry.

Below are some examples of the activities regularly delivered through the programme:



## Meals on Wheels Tralee and Community Café



€4,500

This is a volunteer-run group, with part-time chefs and generous volunteers who selflessly give up their time to support the service. It was established in 1970 in Tralee to provide meals that are freshly cooked and delivered to its clients in Tralee and the surrounding area, 52 weeks of the year.

They have distributed over 75,000 meals since 2020. They currently deliver an average of 17,000



meals annually, while also providing contact with people who live alone who may not have any visitors. Their volunteers also promote the welfare and well-being of the elderly, vulnerable and people in need.

Meals on Wheels Tralee has introduced the Re-turn Bottle and Can initiative to raise essential funds to support our services, including a special Free Christmas Day Dinner for the local community. This initiative encourages local businesses and organisations to recycle used bottles and cans that features the Re-turn logo. The program not only helps fund daily meal deliveries to those who require our service, but also aligns with sustainable environmental practices by promoting recycling within the Tralee area. By participating in the Re-turn scheme, local businesses can contribute to a greener community while ensuring continued support for Meals on Wheels and the annual Christmas dinner, which provides a warm meal and companionship for those who might otherwise spend Christmas Day alone.

## Caring Together



€4,500

Caring Together is dedicated to transforming the lives of vulnerable individual in our community, particularly those who are elderly, people with disabilities, and those struggling with mental health challenges, or living in poverty. They provide essential hands-on support to help people overcome one of the most fundamental barriers to health and well-being: unsafe, cluttered, or unclean living environments. Through their services, they create safer, more comfortable homes that restore dignity, improve mental and physical health, and foster independence.

Many individuals in our community are living in conditions that are not only uncomfortable but potentially dangerous – often due to a combination of physical and mental health challenges, financial hardship, or isolation. For these individuals, the overwhelming burden of household clutter and disrepair can feel insurmountable, leaving them stuck in unhealthy environments with no way out. That's where Caring Together steps in.

Caring Together provides a vital lifeline in collaboration with Social Workers and Public Health Nurses and other professionals working in the community, to identify individual in need of their services. Through home clearances, deep cleaning, and essential safety modifications, they help people regain control of their living spaces, restoring their sense of dignity and security. Their work has an immediate and profound impact, improving the overall health, wellbeing and quality of life of those they serve.

## St. Joseph's Day Care Centre

€3,000

Those who founded moulded and shaped The Social Action Group in Rathmore were strongly influenced by the Christian ethos of service to others by the Meitheal tradition, where neighbours gathered to help neighbours, and by ideals such as social justice and equality. Young people in the group are encouraged to make a genuine effort to brighten up the lives of other people and assist in the creation of a community of share values, responsibilities, opportunities and benefits.

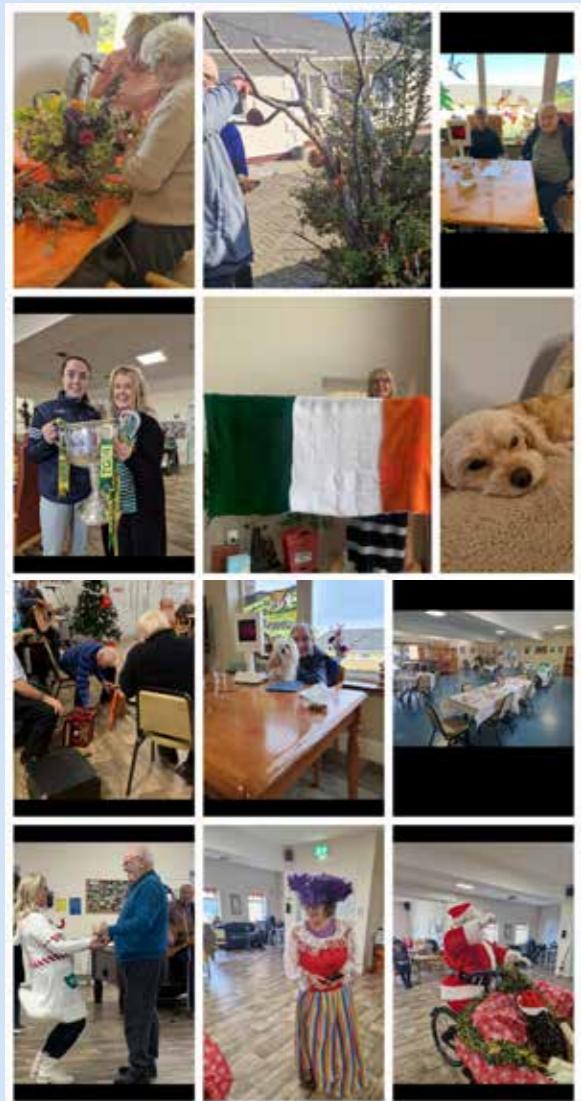
The Social Action Group has a strong community involvement ethos. Young people in the group are encouraged engage with the older people especially those who are vulnerable, have disabilities & dementia. They assist in creating a community of shared values, responsibilities, opportunities and benefits. Services provided: sheltered housing, laundry, meals on wheels and St Joseph's Day Care Centre, which offers a vital service to all older people.

The magic table initiative can improve the wellbeing of our elderly people living with dementia. The interactive games are specially designed for seniors. They are proven to be effective at physical,



cognitive, social and sensory levels, stimulating movement, social interaction, and moments of happiness. Older people living with dementia have the right to feel respected, understood and supported, that is our aim here in St Joseph's Day Care Centre.

The older person living with dementia will feel more socially involved. The staff at St. Joseph's Day Care Centre provide vital services such as Nursing care, Social interaction, activities, hot meals, meals on wheels and dementia care for all the older persons in our community. The levels of dementia diagnosis are rising, and we will endeavour to support the older person living with dementia to have choice to remain in their community by being proactive in developing initiatives like this one.



### Samaritans of Kerry



Samaritans of Kerry respond to approximately 30,000 calls for help every year. They are available, day or night, for anyone who is struggling to cope, who needs someone to listen without judgement or pressure. Samaritans of Kerry is not only for the moment of crisis, but they are also taking action to prevent the crisis. They give people ways to cope and the skills to be there for others. And they encourage, promote and celebrate those moments of connection between people that can save lives. They offer listening and support to people and communities in times of need. In prisons, schools, hospitals and communities, Samaritans are working with people who are going through a difficult time and training others to do the same. Every life lost to suicide is a tragedy, and Samaritans' vision is that fewer people die by suicide. That's why they work tirelessly to reach more people and make suicide prevention a priority. In summary, Samaritans has a crucial role to play in:

- ▶ Reducing the risk factors that make some people more likely to take their own lives.
- ▶ Ensuring that people who are at increased risk of suicide are supported.
- ▶ Making it less likely that people who do experience suicidal thoughts act on them.
- ▶ Reducing the likelihood that people will develop suicidal thoughts.



### St. Ita's and St. Joseph's Primary and Post Primary School



St. Ita's and St. Joseph's is a special school in Tralee that provides specialist education for children and young people aged between 4 and 18 with a mild general learning disability. Junior classes follow the primary curriculum, and senior classes can follow the Junior cycle – level 1 and level 2 learning programmes, transition year and leaving certificate applied. While they primarily serve students with mild general learning disabilities, the school caters to a diverse range of special needs, including autism, EBD, ADD, ADHD, OCD, ODD, Down Syndrome, and physical disabilities. Central to its programs is the development of social skills and community involvement. Students regularly participate in events, excursions, and work experiences within their local communities across Kerry. The school is committed to supporting the social, emotional, spiritual, and educational development of its students, empowering them to become active citizens in their communities.

For a decade, their reliable red school bus has safely transported students to educational outings and activities. Now, it's facing significant issues, and maintenance costs are becoming overwhelming. Despite the school's limited resources, the bus has been vital for providing enriching experiences. With small class sizes, arranging field trips has been challenging due to costly external transportation. The bus has enabled the school to offer hands-on learning experiences, but now it needs replacement.

By facilitating field trips and excursions, the school aims to mitigate issues related to disadvantage, poverty, social exclusion, and marginalization. These outings offer students hands-on learning experiences, fostering a deeper comprehension of academic subjects. With a dedicated bus, they can organize regular trips to museums, historical sites, and cultural events, enriching their educational journey. Moreover, these excursions provide opportunities for students to forge bonds outside the classroom, fostering a sense of belonging and community. By ensuring equitable access to these educational opportunities, the school promotes inclusivity and equal participation among all students, regardless of their socio-economic background. In essence, the bus serves as a vital tool in providing enriching experiences that contribute to both academic advancement and personal development.

*"Our school bus is a vital asset that allows students to access learning experiences in the community, attend swimming sessions, horse riding, local amenities, and take part in cultural and recreational activities that enrich their education."*

*Your support has made a real and lasting difference to the lives of our students, enabling them to access vital learning experiences in the community. We are incredibly grateful for your generosity."*

– Denise Kerins, Acting Deputy Principal



## Movember Movement



From humble beginnings, the Movember movement has grown into a truly global one over the past two decades. It has expanded from an Australian prostate cancer fundraiser to a global charity that takes on some of “the biggest challenges men face” — mental health, suicide prevention as well as testicular cancer. Movember, Ireland’s leading men’s health charity. Movember brings people together from all walks of life — igniting vital conversations, raising much-needed funds, and breaking the silence on men’s health issues that too often go unspoken.

Since 2003, Movember has funded more than 1,250 men’s health projects around the world, challenging the status quo, shaking up men’s health research and transforming the way health services reach and support men. Movember is now the leading charity changing the face of men’s health. Growing a Mo is like wearing a symbol representing healthier men and a healthier world,

all Movember long. It tells everyone that a healthier world matters. It’s one simple action that unites, gives purpose and starts conversations that can sprout real change.

€11,440 in total was raised by the Tralee Bro Family Bonsecours (including a donation of €1,500 from the Community Initiative Fund) who got behind the men’s health charity. This fundraising will fund game-changing men’s health projects in areas such as mental health, suicide prevention, prostate cancer and testicular cancer. The Staff Wellbeing Team in association with the CNS in Urology organised various events throughout the month of November in Bon Secours Hospital Tralee to increase awareness of men’s health issues, specifically Prostate Cancer, Testicular Cancer, Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, and to acknowledge colleagues who took part in the Movember Campaign, growing either a moustache or beard in order to help increase awareness and the importance of self-checking and visiting the G.P when “something doesn’t feel or look right.”



We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop.



— St. Teresa of Calcutta

## Good Help Fund Dental Initiative

€51,000

### Aim:

To build on the existing partnership with the HSE Dental Service for Co. Kerry and the successful funding of the dental general anaesthetic service through rounds one and two of the Good Help Fund in 2022 and 2023 respectively by repeating funding for 2024 with a continuing focus on measuring and improving quality of care.

### Objectives:

1. To provide funding to clear the current waiting list of 20 children who require comprehensive dental treatment under general anaesthesia due to their additional needs in 2024.
2. To utilise a joint BSHS/HSE governance structure for the extension of this valuable service.
3. To implement a quality improvement programme for the service based on best international practice.
4. To continue to be a shining example of public private partnership for the betterment of our community, and a tangible expression of "good help to those in need."

The HSE Dental Service in Co. Kerry has a long tradition of partnership with BSHT in delivering dental care under general anaesthetic to children with special needs and both organisations worked very successfully together during rounds one and two of the Good Help Fund. At the time of application there were 17 children with special needs awaiting treatment, with the longest 'waiter' approximately 12 months. The list continues to grow and there is always the phenomenon that when a service is more responsive clinicians are more inclined to refer (additional demand is generated, a product of success!).

The service model involves HSE dental staff attending BSHT to deliver the treatment and the service utilises BSHT patient accommodation, theatre, anaesthetists, paediatrician, nursing, and support staff. Governance and clinical pathways are already in place, as is quality improvement programme. Similar to 2022 and 2023, the initiative would involve BSHT providing its services for free and the HSE staff would attend on 5 days to clear the existing waiting list.

### Outcomes

- ▶ Due to the fantastic effort by all the stakeholders involved, 20 children with additional needs were catered for as part of this collaborative Project.
- ▶ The project has made a huge difference to these children, as well as their families and carers, who support them.
- ▶ It has also had a significant impact on waiting times on both lists within the HSE Kerry Dental Service.

### Impact

- ▶ The most important was the impact on the individual patients and the families and carers who support them. Children with special needs often cannot articulate pain so clearing the existing waiting list would ensure that children are not suffering in silence.
- ▶ The project had a powerful impact on the waiting list of children with additional needs.
- ▶ An innovative, visually effective and user-friendly Patient Journey Guide was developed for the benefit of our paediatric patients involved in this Project and their parents. Such a Social Story explains social situations to autistic children and children with special needs.
- ▶ A Special Care Dentistry Patient & Parent/Guardian Questionnaire was developed to ascertain the quality-of-service children received while patients in BSHT.

- ▶ A Policy and Procedure for the Paediatric Special Needs Dental General Anaesthetic Service provided at BSHT was also written.
- ▶ A joint BSHT/HSE Paediatric Surgical Special Care Dentistry Service Users Group was established, with Terms of Reference agreed, to discuss any issues that may arise and bring forward new ideas for service improvement.
- ▶ A Consent Form tailored to dental services in line with the format used for other disciplines within BSHT has also been developed.
- ▶ The partnership further enhanced a strong sense of collaboration that currently exists between the HSE Dental Service and BSHT.
- ▶ The project had a strong impact in terms of the reputation of both organisations in the community.
- ▶ What worked well was the excellent teamwork and communication between BSHT and HSE teams to deliver the two initiatives, both in terms of organisation and clinical care.

### Feedback

- ▶ "Our experience as a family was very good in the Bons Secours. Both the dentist and nursing staff were thoughtful and considerate. Dr Pat Quinn followed up with a phone call to me a day after the dental procedure to make sure all was well with our son. As parents, we were particularly impressed by the very 'kind' attention of the nurse who tended to our son before and after his procedure. The world would be a better place if we had more people like her."
- ▶ "Everyone was amazing from when we went in there to when we left."
- ▶ "I would feel more comfortable if there was longer recovery time as a parent and to be supervised longer by a nurse as a patient. Overall fantastic service."
- ▶ "Yes, they went over and beyond for him."





## Community Outreach 2024 Bon Secours Health System

### BUMBLEance & Bon Secours Health System Continue Partnership



In 2024, we proudly continued our partnership with BUMBLEance, the dedicated children's ambulance service. Our three-year sponsorship supports a brand-new vehicle servicing the busy Cork/Dublin route. During its second year, this vehicle completed 248 journeys, a remarkable 70% increase, making it the second busiest BUMBLEance route in the country.

This partnership reflects our unwavering commitment to providing good help to those in need and improving the lives of individuals in our communities. By sponsoring this vital expansion of BUMBLEance's services, we're making a tangible difference in the lives of countless children and families across Ireland.

As a free service for any child who requires assistance, BUMBLEance eliminates the financial burden that often accompanies regular hospital visits. It ensures that healthcare remains accessible to all, regardless of circumstance. We recognise this service as an essential lifeline, enabling children and their families to receive the care they urgently need.

### Pontifical University Maynooth - Academic Partnership



In February 2024, as part of our Bicentenary celebrations for the Sisters of Bon Secours, BSHS proudly announced a bursary of €75,000. This bursary is dedicated to the development of a Level 9 Post Graduate Diploma in 'Values Based Leadership', which will be scalable to a Master's Degree, in partnership with Maynooth University NUI. A values-based stakeholder engagement workshop was organised in September 2024, which played a crucial role in informing discussions on module development.

This partnership will offer a suite of 10-credit modules, aligned with our core values, designed to meet the needs of BSHS in forming and growing leadership capacity across our organisation. These modules, aligned with the QQI national framework, will be completed by staff in their own time and at their own pace. They will be a mix of fully online and partially online modules. The stackable nature of these modules enables not only BSHS staff but also individuals from various sectors, particularly healthcare-related fields, to develop and grow as leaders. This initiative underscores our commitment to fostering leadership and professional growth within our community and beyond.



### Pastoral Care Symposium 2024:



Healthcare chaplaincy is a specialised field that focuses on providing spiritual and emotional support to patients, their families, and healthcare staff within medical settings. Healthcare Chaplains are trained to address the diverse spiritual needs of individuals, offering comfort, guidance, and a sense of peace during challenging times. This support is crucial as it helps in holistic healing, addressing not just physical but also emotional and spiritual well-being.

Bon Secours Health System, known for its commitment to holistic care, organises events such as this Pastoral Care Symposium to emphasise the significance of spiritual care in healthcare. These events provide a platform for sharing knowledge, best practices, and innovative approaches to pastoral care, ensuring that their staff and the wider community are equipped to offer comprehensive support to those in need.

The 2024 Symposium Program:

- ▶ **Prof George Fitchett**, Rush University Chicago, spoke on strengthening spiritual care through research.
- ▶ **Prof Tina Beattie**, Catherine of Sienna Centre, spoke about caring for the dignity and spiritual welfare of persons who consider themselves on "the margins".
- ▶ **Ronan Conway**, Personal Development Coach, spoke about creating psychological safety and a sense of "belonging" during pastoral engagement with patients.
- ▶ **Dr Maureen Gaffney**, Psychologist, author, and journalist, spoke about human well-being and flourishing.

► **Archbishop Dermot Farrell**, Archbishop of Dublin, also gave a brief address to the Symposium.

The Symposium was free to attend sponsored by Bon Secours Health System as an expression of

our commitment to the discipline of Healthcare Chaplaincy.

We acknowledge the generous co-sponsorship from the Sisters of Bon Secours, as part of their Bicentenary celebrations, which enabled the event to happen.



## BSHS Supports Consultant Led Medical Research



In 2024, BSHS collaborated with the Oncology Department at the Cork Hospital in support of a Pilot Study on Acupuncture for Vasomotor Symptoms in Prostate Cancer Patients (VASAPRO).

### Initiative:

This initiative, led by Prof. Conleth Murphy and the Bon Secours Hospital Cork team, was a pilot study evaluating acupuncture as a treatment for hot flushes in men undergoing androgen deprivation therapy (ADT) for prostate cancer. The study addresses a significant unmet need for non-pharmacological symptom relief and included both private and public patients, in collaboration with University College Cork and Cork University Hospital (CUH).

### Community Impact:

Bon Secours Health System provided €5000 of funding support. The project supported underserved patients, including those without health insurance, by offering free acupuncture sessions. It aimed to improve quality of life and reduce financial burden for men affected by ADT-related side effects. The acupuncture sessions were provided in the Bon Secours Hospital Cork physiotherapy department by our experienced physiotherapists Steve Delea and Nicola Kiely.

### Outcomes & Scalability:

The outcomes explored included symptom relief and evidence to support broader use of acupuncture. The project is scalable and may lead to a larger randomised trial. The study report has been accepted for poster presentation at the European Society of Medical Oncology (ESMO) meeting in Berlin in October 2025, and Dr Zain Ul Abedin, oncology registrar will present the poster.

### Timeline:

The study ran from July 15 – December 31, 2024.

## Advancing Professionalism in Healthcare



Bon Secours Health System (BSHS) is proud to champion the advancement of professionalism as a cornerstone of high-quality, compassionate healthcare. As a key partner of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) in the development and growth of professionalism, BSHS continues to support two RCSI Professionalism flagship initiatives that are shaping the future of healthcare leadership and practice:

### 1. RCSI Medical Professionalism Annual Conference 2025

Held in Dublin and online on 11 April 2025, the fifth annual conference—"Teamwork in Healthcare: Working together with passion, purpose and professionalism"—brought together global thought leaders, clinicians, educators, and patients to explore the vital role of teamwork in delivering safe, ethical, and effective care.

Key highlights included:

- ▶ Insights from leading experts on interprofessional collaboration, workforce challenges, and conflict resolution.
- ▶ Reflections from patients and students on the impact of positive team dynamics.
- ▶ Practical strategies for fostering resilience, communication, and leadership in healthcare teams.

The conference reaffirmed the importance of professionalism in navigating complexity, building trust, and enhancing patient outcomes.

## 2. MSc in Professionalism in Medicine and Health Sciences - RCSI

Launching in September 2025, this innovative, fully online Master's programme is designed for physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and allied health professionals seeking to deepen their expertise in ethical leadership, governance, and patient safety.



Key features include:

- ▶ Alignment with international standards (CanMEDS, GMC, IMC, ABIM, ACGME).
- ▶ Integration of the iCARE framework—Compassion, Accountability, Respect, and Excellence.
- ▶ Emphasis on resilience, professional identity, and institutional change.
- ▶ Flexible, part-time delivery to accommodate working professionals.

Both of these initiatives reflect BSHS's commitment to assisting the RCSI in nurturing the next generation of healthcare leaders and promoting a culture of excellence and integrity across the sector.

## Nursing and Quality Conference 2024



On October 9, 2024, we gathered at The Strand Hotel in Limerick for our annual conference, centered around the theme "Vision for the Future: Opportunities for Nursing, Quality & Patient Safety." The event brought together healthcare leaders, nursing professionals, and regulatory experts to explore the evolving landscape of nursing, quality, and patient safety.

The day featured three focused sessions:

- ▶ The Future of Nursing: Keynotes addressed the development of the new Bon Secours Hospital in Limerick, international recruitment, and the upcoming Nursing Strategy 2024–2027.
- ▶ Quality: Accreditation & Regulation: Speakers from HIQA, HSE, and MEG discussed governance, innovation, and quality improvement. Poster presentations showcased impactful initiatives including sepsis management, procedural sedation, and staff wellbeing.
- ▶ Patient Safety: Experts highlighted simulation in healthcare, legal frameworks for safety, and the importance of speaking up for safety.

The event also celebrated the 200-year legacy of the Bon Secours Sisters and concluded with a strong call to action for continued leadership in patient care and safety. We gratefully acknowledge the sponsorship received from the Sisters of Bon Secours towards the 2024 conference.

Key Insights from Nursing and Quality Conference 2024 Presentations

1. Strengthening the Nursing Profession through Leadership and Strategy

Dr. Ray Healy and Peter Carter emphasised the importance of strategic workforce planning, professional development, and system-wide thinking to empower nurses and shape the future of healthcare delivery.

2. Governance and Legal Frameworks are Central to Quality and Safety

Sean Egan, Director of Healthcare Regulation HIQA and Professor Deirdre Madden UCC highlighted the evolving regulatory landscape, stressing the need for robust governance structures and legal protections—particularly around open disclosure and clinical audit—to enhance patient safety.

3. A Culture of Speaking Up and Continuous Improvement is Essential

Margaret McHugh, BSHS Chief Nursing, Quality & Safety Officer, underscored the value of fostering a culture where staff feel empowered to speak up for safety, supported by data-driven quality systems and a commitment to exceptional care.





## Celebrating 200 Years of the Mission of Bon Secours

2024 was certainly a year to remember for all of us at Bon Secours. Since its foundation in Paris in 1824, the Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours has sought to live its Mission of bringing "Good Help" to the sick, the dying and their families in a variety of different ways and in many different contexts. Here in Ireland, the Sisters laid the foundations of what has now become a thriving Health System with over 400 staff.

The renowned Irish artist and sculptor Laura O' Hagan captured the essence of what we celebrated in 2024. When commissioned to produce a piece of commemorative art for the occasion, Laura expressed her desire to pay tribute to the important contribution that all of us make to Bon Secours every day. Her beautiful "Go Ye Afar" piece, now mounted in the front hall of the Cork Hospital (cover piece) honours and celebrates the individual lives and stories of the Sisters of Bon Secours, who, from their foundation in Paris to the present day, left family and home in their service to the Gospel and their Mission over the past 200 years. In a rapidly developing and ever-evolving healthcare landscape in the Ireland of today, that same founding Mission continues to guide and direct Bon Secours Health System so that we can continue to provide exceptional and compassionate care to our patients and their families.

Throughout 2024, Bon Secours Health System as a Group and as individual hospitals marked the Bicentenary through a variety of initiatives and events. Our sincere gratitude to all of our staff who so generously gave of their time and talents to make 2024 a truly memorable year for Bon Secours.

Bon Secours celebrates Foundation Day on 24th January each year. Foundation Day 2024, however, marked a significant milestone in our history with the celebration of the Bicentenary of its foundation. Each of the hospitals, together with Bon Secours Care Village, opened the Bicentennial year with a variety of commemorative events on 24th January, from the celebration of Masses of Thanksgiving to

Dinner Dances and a hugely popular staff quiz at each site. Many thanks to the Sisters for their generous donation of prize vouchers and for the beautiful commemorative Newbridge Silver key-rings for over 4000 staff across the Health System.



## February 2024

In February 2024, the Bonne Chanson Choir from the Cork Hospital made a commemorative trip to Paris to celebrate 200 years of Bon Secours. Among the highlights were a visit to the Maison-Mère of the Congregation where the choir sung for

Mass in its beautiful chapel, a time of recollection at the tomb of Mother Potel and the Founding Sisters and a visit to the Irish Cultural Centre (formerly the Irish College) where they received a céad mile fáilte and a delicious lunch in the courtyard!



## May 2024

In early May, one courageous colleague and keen cyclist, Sean Duggan, set out from Bon Secours Galway on his bike, together with his Support Team, (in their van!) to undertake a 1000km Bicentenary

Fundraiser cycle over 72 hours. Sean and his team received a warm welcome on arrival at each of the Bon Secours sites and raised €20k for the Irish Cancer Society



## 23rd May: BSHS Bicentenary Mass and Dinner

Bon Secours Health System officially marked the 200th Anniversary of the Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours with a commemorative event hosted in Bon Secours Hospital Cork on May 23rd 2024. Over 150 guests attended the occasion, which included the Sisters of Bon Secours, members of the Board of Directors and Management teams, The Deputy Lord Mayor of Cork Dan Boyle, French Ambassador to Ireland Mr. Vincent Guérend, former staff members and friends of the Sisters.



Mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated by Bishop Fintan Gavin. Music from the Bonne Chanson choir provided the perfect accompaniment for the Mass. Many speeches on the day recognised and expressed deep gratitude for the Sisters' legacy, their lives of commitment and service, and the strong foundations they have gifted to our organisation. Renewed thanks to the Catering Department at BSHC and to all of the staff whose valued contribution made this occasion such a memorable and joyous day.

## July 2024

In July, Management and Staff of BSHC once again marked the Bicentenary of the Foundation of the Sisters of Bon Secours with the unveiling of a beautiful Commemorative Piece of artwork "Go Ye Afar", by the artist, Laura O'Hagan.

When working on the piece, Laura described her inspiration as twofold. Emerging from the emblematic Fleur-de-Lys, is a flock of wild Arctic Terns, known for their resilience and breath-taking flight capacity as they migrate from the Arctic to

the Antarctic Circle each year in pursuit of summer light. Herein is captured something of the mission of each of the Sisters of Bon Secours as they left their homes and families in pursuit of their religious vocation.

We were particularly delighted to welcome the Sr. Rosie Jasinski, Congregation Leader and the Leadership team from the United States on this memorable occasion.



## August 2024

At the end of August, Ber Mulcahy, Director of Nursing at BSHC, led a 2-day Bicentenary Pilgrimage Walk along the ancient route of St. Finbarr's Way from Drimoleague to Gougane Barra. Through tough terrains and challenging

hills, the group reflected on the life and spirituality of St. Finbarr. Tired but renewed, they were met at Gougane Barra by colleagues and members of the Congregation for a beautiful prayer service in the Chapel of St. Finbarr on the shores of the lake.



## September 2024

In early September, Harry Canning, CEO, Cork, and Sr Margaret Mary Hanafin, Chairperson of the Congregation's Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation Committee, unveiled a Commemorative

Bicentenary Plaque for the River Lee Walkway. Gifted by UCC, the plaque is as an expression of the University's gratitude to BSHS for making this green link pathway a reality.



## BSHC Bicentenary Fun Day

Also in September, over 800 staff and their families gathered for a very enjoyable Bicentenary Fun Day at Fota Wildlife Park. The day saw Bons staff with their unmistakable blue and white "Bons goodie

bags" wander around the park animal watching, taking part in a treasure hunt, enjoying delicious food, dancing, lots of laughter and camaraderie!



## October 2024 – Bon Secours Camino

October, without doubt, brought one of the true highlights of the Bicentenary celebrations. 50 pilgrims, mostly colleagues and friends from across Bon Secours Health System, completed the last stage of either the Via Frances or the Via Portugues Camino. Despite torrential rain and blistered feet,

the journey shared over those days served to build a treasury of happy memories and forge life-time friendships. On arrival at Santiago de Compostella, both Bon Secours Pilgrim Groups met for a most enjoyable and well deserved evening of fun and friendship.



## Mindfulness Conference

Also in October, over 220 delegates gathered for the 7th Annual Mindfulness Conference 2024. This year's theme was Mindful Values Based Leadership. The Conference was chaired by Harry Canning, CEO, Ber Mulcahy, Director of Nursing and Nollaig Crowley, Business Manager, all at Bon Secours Cork. Guest speakers were Mr Chris Ruane, former MP for Vale of Clwyd Wales, Fr Peter

McVerry Founder of Peter McVerry Trust, Dr Andy Phillips, REO HSE Southwest, Dr Deirdre O'Mahony, Consultant Oncologist Bon Secours Hospital Cork, Dr Martin Egan, Executive Leadership Coach and Professor Patricia Leahy-Warren, Dean of the Catherine McAuley School of Nursing & Midwifery at University College Cork.



## Closing of the Bicentenary Year

Towards the end of the year, Bishop Fintan Gavin joined the Sisters of Bon Secours, residents and staff of the Care Village for Mass to bring the Bicentenary commemorations to a close.

A stunningly beautiful piece of artwork named “Creation’s Dance”, by the Irish artist, Laura O’Hagan, was unveiled in the foyer of the Care Village after Mass. This piece pays tribute to the

Sisters of Bon Secours, and in particular to the Sisters who lived and worked at Mt. Desert since its establishment as a sanatorium in 1932 for patients with tuberculosis. The piece is equally a tribute to all of our staff, past and present, who, for generations, have contributed so much to our Mission in providing compassionate care to the sick, the dying and their families.



## Heads of Mission

**BSHS Community Outreach Fund is managed by the Heads of Mission.  
For more information, please contact:**



### Andrew McCarthy

Chief Group Mission and Sponsorship Officer

📞 018065300

✉️ AMMcCarthy@bonsecours.ie



### Alan Burke

Head of Mission, Bon Secours Hospital Galway/Bon Secours Hospital Limerick

📞 091381900

✉️ aburke@bonsecours.ie



### Dwayne Gavin

Head of Mission, Bon Secours Hospital Cork, Bon Secours Care Village

📞 0214542807

✉️ dgavin@bonsecours.ie



### Owen McCarthy

Head of Mission, Bon Secours Hospital Tralee

📞 066 7149800

✉️ Omccarthy@bonsecours.ie



### John Coughlan

Head of Mission, Bon Secours Hospital Dublin

📞 018065300

✉️ jcoughlan@bonsecours.ie



[www.bonsecours.ie](http://www.bonsecours.ie)