

# Sarcoma Cancer Ireland

Empowering Sarcoma Patients And Families

## Annual Report 2024

Prepared by  
Carol Haslam, Company Secretary





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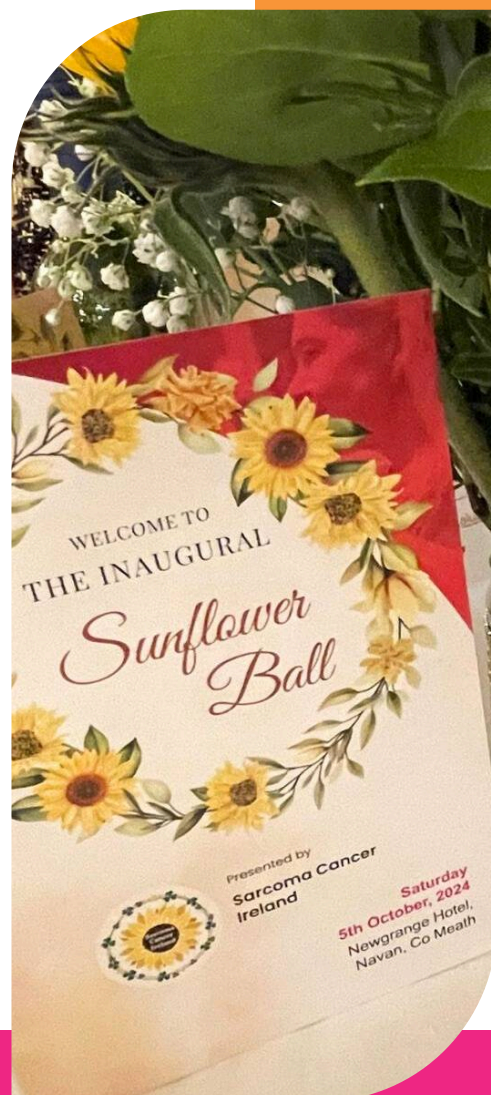






# Legal and Administrative Information

- Charity Name: Sarcoma Cancer Ireland CLG
- Company Number: 753363
- Charity Registered Number: 20206638
- CHY Number: 23130
- Legal Form: Company Limited by Guarantee and Registered Charity
- Registered Office: Station Road, Sutton, Dublin, D13 A2P3, Ireland
- Website: [www.sarcoma.ie](http://www.sarcoma.ie)
- Email: [info@sarcoma.ie](mailto:info@sarcoma.ie)



## Vision

A future where every person with sarcoma in Ireland feels supported, informed, and never alone.

## Objectives and Activities Mission:

Sarcoma Cancer Ireland is dedicated to supporting individuals and families affected by sarcoma through emotional, practical, and financial support, while also raising awareness and advocating for better care.





# Chairperson's Statement



## Rebecca Guilfoyle

Chair

As Chairperson of **Sarcoma Cancer Ireland CLG**, I am honoured to present our Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2024. This year has been marked by significant achievements and milestones that reflect our unwavering commitment to supporting individuals and families affected by sarcoma.

## Key Highlights and Achievements

- We attained official charity status with the Irish Charities Regulator and delivered substantial support, education, and advocacy for those impacted by sarcoma in Ireland.
- Our Education Committee ran impactful campaigns during Sarcoma Awareness Month and Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, reaching thousands through social media, local events, and educational materials. We collaborated with the Irish Sarcoma Group to deliver an in-person Patient Information Day and developed a GP Education campaign for earlier detection and referral.
- Our Advocacy efforts included participation in the Sarcoma Patient Advocacy Global Network (SPAGN), attending conferences in Rome and Barcelona, and advocating for the development of a Sarcoma Information brochure by the Irish Cancer Society.
- The Support Committee provided 56 financial grants of €500 each, expanded our counselling service, and launched a pilot AYA Support initiative. We also developed plans for in-person peer support groups for 2025.
- From a fundraising perspective, we have yet again been blown away by the support that we have received from the Irish sarcoma community, who took part in marathons, 10k runs, climbed mountains, organised sporting tournaments and fashion shows to support our cause. We were delighted to hold our inaugural Sunflower Ball, which was well-attended and sponsored by local businesses – providing an evening of solidarity, support and dancing for those in attendance.



## Governance & Sustainability

- As a fledgling organisation, we focused on building a sustainable future, ensuring professional skills within our Board, and maintaining financial transparency and good governance.
- With 100% of our funds coming from members of the public, financial transparency and good governance is a fundamental focus area for the Board and we were delighted to welcome 3 new Board members to strengthen the organisation further.
- All 3 Board members bring different skills that will enhance our ability to deliver on our core goals from a patient experience and good governance perspective, and will take leading our Finance, Support and Risk & Administration Committees.

## Plans for 2025

In 2025, we will expand our support and advocacy work, offering free counselling, peer support, and monthly support groups. Our GP Education Initiative will be rolled out to all General Practitioners in Ireland. We plan targeted programmes for AYA patients and aim to invest in the training and engagement of our volunteers and peer supporters. We will also launch new fundraising campaigns and explore corporate sponsorship opportunities.

## Conclusion

I am immensely proud of the progress we have made in 2024 and the positive impact we have had on the lives of those affected by sarcoma. Our achievements are a testament to the dedication and hard work of our board members, volunteers, and supporters. Together, we will continue to strive for a future where every person with sarcoma in Ireland feels supported, informed, and never alone.

**Rebecca Guilfoyle Chairperson,  
Sarcoma Cancer Ireland CLG**



# Board Members (2024)



**Rebecca Guilfoyle**

Chairperson  
(Founding member)



**Carol Haslam**

Company Secretary &  
Operations Lead  
(Founding member)



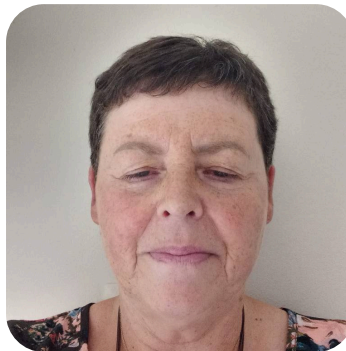
**Kelli Appezzato**

Advocacy & Education Lead  
(Founding member)



**David Smeed**

Finance Director  
(Founding member)



**Angela Wallace**

Director  
(Founding member)



**Deirdre Lawlor**

Director  
(Founding member;  
retired during 2024)

## Board Nominees (June–September 2024, ratified at AGM in September 2024):



**Christopher Paul Lund**

Treasurer & Finance  
Committee Lead



**John Ruddy**

Risk & Administration  
Committee Lead



**Catherine Leith**

Support Committee  
Lead



# Board and Key Staff Biographies



## **Rebecca Guilfoyle** Chairperson

Rebecca brings over 15 years of leadership experience and a background in project management within regulated environments. She oversees strategic planning for the board.

Rebecca is a founding Board member and was nominated to become Board Chair in 2023. Introduced to sarcoma when her stepfather was diagnosed in 2019, she is committed to building a solid and sustainable organisation to meet the vision and strategic goals of Sarcoma Cancer Ireland. Rebecca has a background leading teams and projects in the pharmaceutical and financial services sectors. She is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP) and gained her undergraduate degree from UCC and has completed numerous post-graduate qualifications. More recently she undertook a Postgraduate Diploma in Organisational Development and Transformation with the Irish Management Institute to support the establishment of Sarcoma Cancer Ireland. Rebecca lives in Cork with her husband and young children



## **Carol Haslam** Operations Lead & Company Secretary

Carol is a founding board member of Sarcoma Cancer Ireland, diagnosed with sarcoma in 2017 which led to the amputation of her arm. She co-founded the charity during the COVID-19 pandemic and now oversees operations, fundraising, and governance, driven by her personal experience and background in small business management. Carol lives in County Meath with her family, balancing her role with support for patients and families.



## Board and Key Staff Biographies



### **Kelli Appezzato**

#### **Advocacy & Education Lead**

When her husband was diagnosed with leiomyosarcoma in 2016, Kelli couldn't find support in Ireland. She helped lead a grassroots campaign to appoint a sarcoma specialist, which evolved into Sarcoma Cancer Ireland. Today, she chairs the Advocacy & Education Committee, focusing on raising public and professional awareness. Kelli has a professional background in marketing. She is also a mother of four and grandmother of two, and lives in rural Kilkenny.



### **Angela Wallace**

#### **Founding Board Member**

Angela is a founding board member and retired from a 30+ year career in the forestry sector, specialising in environmental protection and biodiversity. After her son Lee passed from pelvic sarcoma, she helped establish SCI to ensure better support and information for sarcoma patients and families. Angela enjoys fundraising, gardening, and time with family as a devoted grandmother.



### **David Smeed**

#### **Finance Director**

David brings over 25 years' financial experience as a regulated QFA and board finance committee member. He ensures robust financial oversight, drawing on international hedge fund and impact investing expertise. A Dublin native whose father battled sarcoma, David is committed to stewarding resources for patient support and sustainability.



## Board and Key Staff Biographies



### **Catherine Leith**

#### **Volunteer Board Member & Support Lead**

Catherine has volunteered with SCI since 2022 and joined the board in June 2024. A synovial sarcoma survivor, she brings lived experience and advocacy to design and deliver support services. In her role as Support Lead, she oversees patient grants and counselling coordination, ensuring our programmes meet real patient needs. Catherine lives in County Antrim, is a proud mum of two, and believes deeply in community and compassion.



### **Paul Lund**

#### **Finance Director & Treasurer**

Paul began volunteering with SCI in early 2024 and joined the board later that year. Inspired by his mother's cancer diagnosis, Paul supports SCI's mission. He is an Indirect Tax Manager with Deloitte Australia and a Chartered Accountant with broad experience in tax advisory. Paul is a Galway native, currently living in Sydney with his partner, where he continues to fulfil his Board responsibilities remotely.



### **John Ruddy**

#### **Risk & Administration Lead**

John joined the board in June 2024 and brings over 20 years' experience in software development, digital strategy, and project management. Originally from Achill Island and now based in Kildare, he holds a Master's in IT Enabled Innovation from Maynooth University. Inspired by family members' battles with cancer, John champions systems improvements and data protection to strengthen the charity's operations.



# Counselling and Support Group Facilitators

## **Ann P. Butler**

### Accredited Psychotherapist

Ann established SCI's counselling and support group services, delivering compassionate therapy sessions and facilitating group support. With over 10 years' experience in psychotherapy, she brings expertise in grief counselling and trauma-informed care.

Ann is contracted to deliver SCI's one-to-one counselling service and generously volunteers her time to facilitate monthly support groups for patients and families living with sarcoma.



## **Peter Mulvihill**

### Accredited Psychotherapist

Peter joined SCI in 2024 to help expand our counselling services. He provides one-to-one therapy for individuals affected by sarcoma and facilitates group support sessions.

Peter is contracted to deliver SCI's one-to-one counselling service and kindly volunteers his time to lead our monthly bereavement support group for those who have lost a loved one to sarcoma.





# Achievements and Performance in 2024

In 2024, Sarcoma Cancer Ireland delivered significant support and saw strong community engagement. Our achievements represent real impacts on patients' lives and growing awareness across the country.

## Key Achievements

-  56 financial grants of €500 each provided critical relief for travel, utilities, and food, enabling patients to focus on treatment rather than expenses.
-  77 one-to-one counselling sessions offered compassionate, professional support to patients and family members, helping reduce anxiety and isolation.
-  Support Groups: We hosted 12 virtual patient and family support groups and 2 specialised bereavement groups, providing safe spaces for sharing and mutual encouragement.
-  Patient Information Day: Co-hosted with the Irish Sarcoma Group, this hybrid event brought medical experts, therapists, and survivors together to share knowledge and hope.



-  AYA Support: Introduced a food and coffee voucher initiative for Adolescent & Young Adult patients at St. Vincent's Hospital, addressing practical wellbeing needs during treatment.
-  Fundraising Success: Over €15,000 raised at The Sunflower Ball provided both vital funds and an uplifting community celebration.

### **Service Expansion:**

-  Onboarded Peter Mulvihill, a second accredited psychotherapist, expanding our counselling capacity.
-  Expanded our online support groups to include a monthly bereavement group.

### **Awareness Campaigns:**

-  Ran impactful campaigns during Sarcoma Awareness Month (July) and Childhood Cancer Awareness Month (September), reaching thousands through social media, local events, and educational materials.

### **Fundraising Events:**

-  VHI Mini Marathon: An inspiring team effort raised €16,555, showcasing the dedication of community runners.
-  Stroll for Sarcoma: Small teams nationwide walked to raise €9,820, turning footsteps into hope.
-  Big Yellow Picnic: Families and friends hosted gatherings that raised over €5,500, spreading joy and solidarity.
-  2025 Calendar & Festive Socks: Sales of sarcoma patient Suzanne Behan's wildlife photography calendars and seasonal socks continue to bring in support and awareness.

Each of these milestones reflects our ongoing commitment to improve the lives of those living with sarcoma and strengthen the supportive network around them.



# Financial Review

(A detailed financial report is included as an appendix to this.)



## Income and Expenditure Summary:

- Total Income: €111,630
- Total Expenditure: €61,091
- Surplus: €50,287

## Key Spending Areas

- Financial grants to patients: €30,000
- Counselling support services: €4,620
- Support group facilitation, advocacy, IT, admin, fundraising expenses as detailed in accounts

## Year-End Position:

- Cash at bank: €71,043
- Investments: €126,498
- Net assets: €197,541



# Plans for 2025

Building on the successes of 2024, Sarcoma Cancer Ireland will focus in 2025 on expanding and deepening our support and advocacy work:

## **Sustain and Enhance Core Service**

We will continue to offer free counselling, peer support, and monthly support groups, ensuring that every patient and family member has access to the emotional and practical help they need.

## **GP Education Initiative Roll-Out:**

Following the development phase, we will complete and distribute our tailored educational leaflet to all General Practitioners in Ireland, aiming to improve early detection and referral rates for sarcoma.

## **Peer Support Training Programme:**

We will recruit and train a new cohort of volunteer peer supporters, delivering a structured training curriculum that equips them with the skills to provide compassionate, experienced-based guidance to newly diagnosed patients.

## **Adolescent & Young Adult (AYA) Support Expansion:**

Based on 2024 feedback, we intend to expand voucher support to reduce treatment-related financial pressures and work with our AYA patients and their families to see how we can further support our young patients

## **Innovative Fundraising and Partnerships:**

To secure and diversify our funding streams, we will launch new fundraising campaigns, explore corporate sponsorship opportunities, and strengthen relationships with existing partners and donors.

Through these initiatives, we aim to reach more sarcoma patients, improve early diagnosis, and foster a stronger, more informed community of support across Ireland.



# Statement

of Public Benefit Sarcoma Cancer Ireland CLG delivers clear and tangible public benefits by:

- Providing free, one-to-one counselling and peer support to patients and families, helping to reduce isolation and improve emotional well-being.
- Awarding financial grants to cover essential costs (travel, utilities, food), ensuring that financial hardship does not prevent access to treatment and care.
- Running virtual and in person support groups, offering practical advice, coping strategies, and a sense of community to those affected by sarcoma.
- Leading awareness campaigns and education initiatives (including Healthcare Professional training and public events) that increase early detection, improve referrals, and raise understanding of this rare cancer across Ireland.

These activities not only directly support individuals living with sarcoma but also strengthen public knowledge and professional awareness, contributing to earlier diagnoses and better outcomes.



# Contact Us

Email: [info@sarcoma.ie](mailto:info@sarcoma.ie)

Facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/sarcomacancerireland](http://www.facebook.com/sarcomacancerireland)

Instagram:  
[www.instagram.com/sarcomacancerireland](http://www.instagram.com/sarcomacancerireland)

Reference and Administrative  
Information Prepared by:  
Carol Haslam, Company  
Secretary

Approved by:  
Board of Directors,  
Sarcoma Cancer Ireland

Date:

02/10/25

Signature (on behalf of the  
board):

[Signature]

Website  
[www.sarcoma.ie](http://www.sarcoma.ie)





# Appendix

Financial Statements (See "Sarcoma Cancer Ireland CLG  
- Accounts for annual report.docx")

Detailed profit and loss account

Financial year ended 31 December 2024

|                                         | Note | 2024<br>€       | 2023<br>€       |
|-----------------------------------------|------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Income</b>                           |      |                 |                 |
| Charitable Donations                    | 1    | 110,132         | 113,749         |
| Interest/finance income                 | 1    | 1,498           |                 |
| <b>Gross Income</b>                     |      | <b>111,630</b>  | <b>113,749</b>  |
| <b>Finance assistance grants issued</b> |      | <b>(30,000)</b> | <b>(16,250)</b> |
| <b>Operating Expenses</b>               |      |                 |                 |
| Administration                          | 2    | (4,646)         | (153)           |
| Advocacy expenses                       | 3    | (6,315)         | (1,407)         |
| Finance & Compliance                    | 4    | (1,469)         | (1,049)         |
| Fundraising expenses                    | 5    | (13,522)        | (909)           |
| Support expenses                        | 6    | (4,620)         | (1,454)         |
| IT Expenses                             | 7    | (519)           | (1,603)         |
| <b>Total Operating Expenses</b>         |      | <b>(31,091)</b> | <b>(6,575)</b>  |
| <b>Net income before tax</b>            |      | <b>50,539</b>   | <b>90,924</b>   |



# Appendix

## Balance sheet as at 31 December 2024

|                            | 2024<br>€      | 2023<br>€      |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Current assets</b>      |                |                |
| Cash                       | 71,043         | 148,026        |
| Investments                | 126,498        |                |
|                            | <b>197,541</b> | <b>148,026</b> |
| <b>Total Assets</b>        | <b>197,541</b> | <b>148,026</b> |
| <b>Liabilities</b>         |                |                |
| <b>Current Liabilities</b> |                |                |
| Accounts payable           | -              | - 772          |
|                            | <b>-</b>       | <b>- 772</b>   |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>   | <b>-</b>       | <b>- 772</b>   |
| <b>Net Assets</b>          | <b>197,541</b> | <b>147,254</b> |
| <b>Equity</b>              |                |                |
| Retained earnings          | 197,541        | 147,254        |
|                            | <b>197,541</b> | <b>147,254</b> |