



Sarcoma Cancer Ireland

Summer 2026

Dear Supporters,

As we reach the halfway point of 2026, I want to take a moment to thank every patient, family member, volunteer, healthcare professional, fundraiser and supporter who continues to stand alongside Sarcoma Cancer Ireland. Your kindness and generosity make everything we do possible.

This year has already seen us expand our support services, launch our new Support Line, introduce two new family support grants, and continue advocating for better outcomes for everyone affected by sarcoma. While we are incredibly proud of what we have achieved together, we know there is still much more to do.

On behalf of the Board, thank you for believing in our mission and for helping us build a stronger, more connected sarcoma community. We look forward to sharing the rest of our journey with you throughout the remainder of 2026.

Carol Haslam

Operations Lead & Company Secretary



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Supporting You Every Step of the Way

2026 Update

We are proud to continue offering meaningful, practical, and compassionate support to sarcoma patients and their families across Ireland. So far in 2026, we've been able to provide:

- 34 financial grants to adult sarcoma patients in the Republic of Ireland
- 103 one-to-one counselling sessions with our dedicated professional counsellors
- 7 online support groups, providing a safe and understanding space for patients to connect each month
- 7 bereavement support groups, helping families and loved ones navigate loss
- 2 in-person support groups held in Cork and Limerick, bringing patients and family members together to share experiences and support one another

If you're interested in helping us run a peer support group or would like to get involved, please email us at support@sarcoma.ie – we'd love to hear from you!

In May, we were also very pleased to launch our new **Support Line**. Our Support Line is a free, confidential service available to anyone affected by sarcoma.

Whether you have questions, need support, or simply want to talk to someone who understands, we are here. Through the support line you can:

- Speak with someone who listens
- Receive clear, reliable information
- Ask questions, no matter how small
- Access support at your own pace

Whether you're newly diagnosed, in treatment, recovering, or supporting someone with sarcoma, you are not alone.



Introducing our Support Line team

Reach out to us to learn more or access our support services.

"Hi, my name is Mary & I'm 55 years old. I'm a mum to three, one adult child & two teenagers. I lost my first husband, John, to Synovial Sarcoma in January 2004 after an arduous fought battle & amputation which began in 1999. I joined the Sarcoma Cancer Ireland helpline team in April of 2026, hoping that by lending a caring ear might make a difference to even one person on their cancer journey.

This amazing charity provides support, practical help & a sense of belonging on what can be an extremely lonely & difficult journey..💛💜"



Mary McDonnell

Louise Whitehead



"Hi everyone, my name is Louise. I'm 52, a retired nurse, mother of 2 and grandmother to 1 beautiful grandson. I joined Sarcoma Cancer Ireland as I have treated people through illnesses, battled an illness myself and understand how lonely and terrifying it can be to feel alone some days. Some days just a sympathetic ear, a gentle voice or supportive word can make such a huge impact. I currently have a close family member going through the sarcoma journey at present and have witnessed what a little support can do on their darkest of days.

I hope I can help give that support either through our helpline or referral to other supports this wonderful charity offers."

Key Achievements in Early 2026

Launch of Our Strategic Plan 2026–2028

On **Rare Disease Day, 28th February**, Sarcoma Cancer Ireland proudly launched our **Strategic Plan 2026–2028**, setting out an ambitious roadmap for the next three years and reaffirming our commitment to improving outcomes for everyone affected by sarcoma.

The plan focuses on strengthening patient and family support services, increasing awareness of sarcoma among both the public and healthcare professionals, enhancing advocacy efforts, improving collaboration with medical teams, and ensuring the lived experiences of patients and families remain at the heart of everything we do.

As a charity founded and led by patients and carers, we are committed to building a future where every person affected by sarcoma receives the support, understanding and care they deserve.

[READ OUR STRATEGIC PLAN](#)



Launch of Two New Family Support Grants

In June, we were delighted to announce the launch of two new support grants designed to provide practical and emotional assistance to families affected by sarcoma.

For further information contact our team at support@sarcoma.ie or speak to us directly on 085 769 4115 during our support hours: Tuesdays 10am–1pm and Thursdays 5pm–8pm.

Our new **Play Therapy Funding Grant** will help children whose parent has been diagnosed with sarcoma access accredited play therapy services. A cancer diagnosis can have a significant impact on children, and this support aims to provide a safe space where they can express their emotions and build resilience during a difficult time.

We also introduced a **Funeral Grant**, providing a once-off payment of €500 to eligible families following the loss of a loved one to sarcoma. The grant is intended to ease some of the financial pressures families may face during bereavement.

These new initiatives reflect our belief that sarcoma affects entire families, not just the individual diagnosed. By expanding our support services, we hope to ensure that families receive compassionate and meaningful support when they need it most.

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Advocacy updates

SPAGN Conference

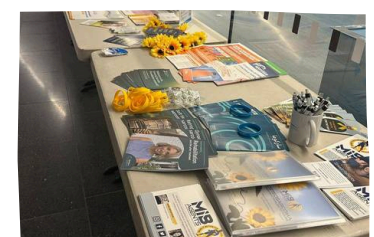
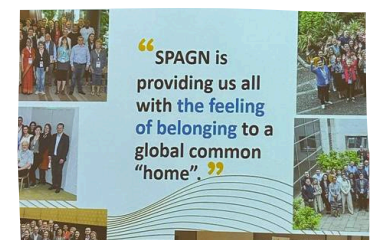
In early May, board members Carol, Kelli and Catherine travelled to Sweden to attend the 2026 SPAGN (Sarcoma Patient Advocacy Global Network) Conference, proudly representing the Irish sarcoma community on an international stage.

The conference brought together sarcoma patient advocacy organisations from around the world, alongside leading oncologists, researchers and healthcare professionals, to discuss the latest developments in sarcoma treatment, research and patient support.

It was an invaluable opportunity to learn from other patient organisations, share experiences and ideas, and strengthen the relationships that help drive progress for sarcoma patients globally. Hearing about the innovative ways other groups are supporting their communities was both inspiring and motivating.

The conference also provided encouraging updates on advances in sarcoma research, emerging therapies and new treatment approaches. These developments give hope that we are moving closer to more effective treatments and better outcomes for people affected by sarcoma.

A sincere thank you and congratulations to the SPAGN team for organising such a well-run, informative and inspiring event. We were delighted to be part of it and look forward to continuing to work alongside the international sarcoma community to improve the lives of patients and families everywhere.



Fundraising Updates: Communities Across Ireland Making a Difference

We continue to be overwhelmed by the generosity, kindness and dedication of individuals and communities across Ireland who choose to support Sarcoma Cancer Ireland. Every fundraiser, donation and event helps us provide vital support services to sarcoma patients and their families.

The year began on a high note with the **Shaun Hilmi Memorial 5km Run in Nenagh** on 1st January, which raised an incredible €1,762.70. We are deeply grateful to everyone who took part, donated and supported this special event in Shaun's memory.



A huge thank you to **Jakub Czarnecki**, who organised **Katie's Memorial Raffle** in January in aid of Sarcoma Cancer Ireland. Held in memory of Katie, the raffle was a wonderful tribute that brought people together while raising vital funds to support sarcoma patients and their families across Ireland. We are grateful to Jakub, everyone who donated prizes, and all who purchased tickets and supported this special fundraiser.

In February, the **Goodvibes Ukulele Group** raised an amazing €1,220 and the **Rugs Ukulele Group** raised €700 in memory of **Deirdre Lawlor**, who sadly passed away a year ago. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to both groups for their generosity. These funds will directly support sarcoma patients and families across Ireland through counselling, support groups and financial assistance programmes.

A huge thank you to everyone who supported our **Grand Easter Raffle**. The raffle raised an amazing €3,660. We were blown away by the kindness of everyone who bought tickets, donated prizes, shared our posts and made the fundraiser such a success.



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Fundraising Updates: Communities Across Ireland Making a Difference

A heartfelt thank you to Mairead, her family, friends, colleagues, and everyone involved in organising and supporting the **David Matthews Memorial French Boules Tournament**. The two-day tournament was held in Phairs, Shannonvale, Clonakilty on David's first anniversary — a meaningful way to remember David in a place where he loved taking part in the summer boules tournaments. Mairead also shared an iDonate fundraiser for those who could not attend, including within her workplace, Trend Micro in Cork, who kindly approved a give-and-match initiative where employee donations were matched.

Together, an incredible €13,600 was raised to support people affected by sarcoma.



A heartfelt thank you also goes to **Felicity, Alex and Ivy**, who organised a fundraising campaign in memory of Josephine. Their generosity, dedication and commitment to raising awareness and funds (€6,337) for those affected by sarcoma is truly appreciated.

A huge thank you and congratulations to our incredible **Dublin Half Marathon** runners. Taking on a half marathon is a remarkable achievement, requiring dedication, perseverance and months of preparation. Not only did our runners complete this fantastic challenge, but together they raised an outstanding €8,291.09 for Sarcoma Cancer Ireland. We are proud of every single participant and grateful for their commitment to our cause.

Congratulations to the amazing team from **CrossFit Leixlip** who took part in **Battle Cancer 2026** at the RDS Simmonscourt. The team took on the challenge in support of one of their own, whose husband is currently living with sarcoma. Their determination, strength, and support for each other was truly inspiring. Not only did they absolutely smash the challenge on the day, they also raised an incredible €6,060 for Sarcoma Cancer Ireland.

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Fundraising Updates: Communities Across Ireland Making a Difference

We would also like to thank the wonderful ladies of the **Horseleap Irish Countrywomen's Association**, who raised an incredible €1,220 through their line dancing classes.

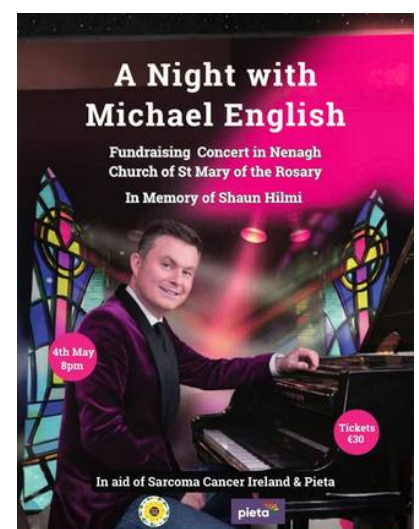
A special thank you goes to **Evelyn**, who generously volunteered her time and talents to teach the classes free of charge. The decision to turn the classes into a fundraiser for Sarcoma Cancer Ireland was a truly thoughtful gesture, and we are extremely grateful for their support.



A huge congratulations and thank you to **Barry Malone, who took on the Düsseldorf Marathon in memory of his friend Fintan McDonald**, affectionately known as "Battler". Completing a marathon requires months of commitment, training and determination, and Barry used this incredible challenge to raise both awareness and funds for Sarcoma Cancer Ireland. Through his efforts, he raised an outstanding €2,650.

One of the highlights of the year so far was "**A Night with Michael English**" held in memory of **Shaun Hilmi**. It was an unforgettable evening filled with music, community spirit and generosity, raising an incredible €11,865.15 for Sarcoma Cancer Ireland.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the dedicated organising committee — Mary Frend, Breda Blessing, Mairead Coakley, Mary Garrigan, Billy Howard and Geraldine Hilmi — whose hard work and commitment made the event such a success.



To everyone who has fundraised, donated, volunteered or supported us: thank you.

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Get Involved: Current Fundraising Campaigns

There is still plenty of time to get involved and support Sarcoma Cancer Ireland through our current fundraising campaigns.



As June comes to an end, we would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who took part in our Steps for Strength Challenge.

Whether you walked 50km solo, with friends, family or as part of a team, your support has helped raise awareness of sarcoma and support the work of Sarcoma Cancer Ireland. We have loved following your progress throughout the month and are incredibly grateful to everyone who got involved.

Seeds for Sarcoma

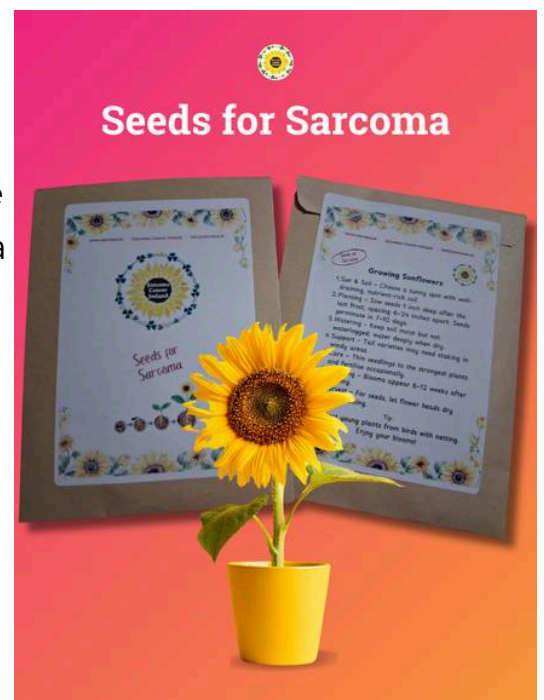
We are delighted to welcome back our Seeds for Sarcoma campaign this summer.

This special campaign invites supporters to plant sunflowers as a symbol of hope, strength and solidarity with everyone affected by sarcoma. As the flowers grow throughout the season, they serve as a visible reminder of the strength of our sarcoma community and the support that surrounds it.

Every pack of sunflower seeds purchased helps Sarcoma Cancer Ireland continue providing essential services and support to patients and families across Ireland.

Sometimes the smallest actions can have the biggest impact. By planting a few seeds, you are helping hope grow for those facing a sarcoma diagnosis.

Order your Seeds for Sarcoma pack today and help us watch something powerful grow this summer.



SEEDS FOR SARCOMA



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Get Involved: Current Fundraising Campaigns

The Big Yellow Picnic



We're inviting you to host your own **Big Yellow Picnic** anytime during July to help raise awareness for sarcoma in a simple, joyful way. Whether it's a coffee morning, a garden get-together, or a full picnic spread, it's a chance to come together with family, friends, and your community.

We'll even send you a free picnic pack with goodies like tablecloths, plates, and decorations to make your event extra special. Sarcoma doesn't just affect the patient — it touches everyone around them. So let's gather, connect, and show support in sunshine and solidarity. ❤️ For more information and to register go to our website.

THE BIG YELLOW PICNIC



We are currently working on the development of a new Sarcoma Cancer Ireland website, which we hope to launch later this year. The new website is being designed to make it easier for patients, families, healthcare professionals and supporters to access information, support services and resources in one central location.

With improved navigation, updated content and a more user-friendly experience, the website will help ensure that anyone affected by sarcoma can quickly find the information and support they need, when they need it. We look forward to sharing more details in the coming months.

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Upcoming Events and Volunteer Opportunities

As part of Sarcoma Awareness Month, we are delighted to announce that our next **Patient Information Day** will take place on:

Saturday, 18th July 2026
Maldron Hotel Merrion Road, Dublin 4



Our Patient Information Day is one of the most important events in the Sarcoma Cancer Ireland calendar, bringing together patients, families, carers, healthcare professionals and researchers for a day of learning, connection and support.

Attendees can look forward to:

- Expert presentations on sarcoma diagnosis, treatment and emerging research
- Practical information and guidance for navigating the sarcoma journey
- Opportunities to ask questions and hear directly from specialists
- Time to connect with others who understand the challenges of living with or supporting someone affected by sarcoma

With sarcoma being a rare cancer, opportunities to meet others with shared experiences can be invaluable. Our Patient Information Day provides a welcoming and supportive environment where attendees can feel informed, empowered and part of a wider community.

We look forward to welcoming you for what promises to be another insightful and inspiring event.

REGISTER HERE



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Upcoming Events and Volunteer Opportunities

Camino de Santiago Fundraising Walk

This September, supporters will take on an unforgettable challenge as they embark on the Camino de Santiago

Fundraising Walk. This year, 22 amazing supporters will be taking on the Walk.

Over seven nights, participants will walk together along one of the world's most famous pilgrimage routes, beginning in Santiago de Compostela. The walk will bring together patients, survivors, family members, carers, friends and supporters, united by a shared goal of raising awareness and funds for those affected by sarcoma across Ireland.

More than just a fundraising event, the Camino offers an opportunity to build friendships, reflect, support one another and create lasting memories while making a meaningful difference.

We are excited to follow the journey of everyone taking part and wish all our walkers the very best as they prepare for this incredible experience. Together, we will walk for awareness, for community and for hope.

We've had a busy start to the year, and there's still so much to look forward to. Whether you're planning a picnic, joining us at an event, or simply cheering us on from home, thank you for being part of this journey. Together, we're making a difference—one step, sunflower, and smile at a time.

Join Sarcoma Cancer Ireland as a volunteer and help make a meaningful impact in supporting those affected by sarcoma.

Get Details on how to Volunteer



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