



Sarcoma Cancer Ireland

Winter 2025

Welcome to our Winter 2025 Newsletter

As we come to the end of 2025, it feels like the right moment to pause and reflect on what has been an incredibly meaningful year for Sarcoma Cancer Ireland.

Over the past twelve months we've shared stories, milestones, challenges, and moments of hope — and through it all, our community has shown extraordinary strength.

From patient support and advocacy to fundraising events, awareness campaigns, and new initiatives, this year has reminded us of what can happen when people come together with purpose. Whether you volunteered your time, shared your story, attended an event, donated, or simply followed along and supported us from afar — you have been part of every step forward.

In this edition, we're delighted to share updates on the work happening across the charity:

- recent events and community highlights
- our advocacy efforts at national and international levels
- the support services we continue to expand
- stories of resilience from within our community
- and a look ahead at what's coming in 2026



We'll also share ways to get involved — from volunteering to upcoming activities — because the heart of SCI has always been the people who stand with us.

Thank you for being part of the sarcoma community. Your support truly makes a difference, and we are deeply grateful.

Let's take a look back at the past few months — and look forward to everything we can build together in the year ahead.

Follow Us    

Supporting You Every Step of the Way

2025 Update

We are proud to continue offering meaningful, practical, and compassionate support to sarcoma patients and their families across Ireland. So far in 2025, we've been able to provide:

- 68 financial grants to adult patients in the ROI
- 148 one-to-one counselling sessions for patients and family members
- 24 online support groups (2 per month) - patient support sessions led by Ann and bereavement support sessions led by Peter
- 5 in person support groups (Cork, Dublin & Limerick)
- We have extended our program for AYA (Adolescent and Young Adult) patients in Dublin and Cork, offering food and coffee vouchers to those undergoing long hospital stays

Whether you're newly diagnosed, in treatment, recovering, or supporting someone with sarcoma, you are not alone. Reach out to us anytime to learn more or access our support services.

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!



Our Annual Report is available to view on our website, offering a detailed overview of our work, impact, and progress over the past year. It reflects the dedication of our volunteers, supporters, and partners, and our continued commitment to supporting the sarcoma community across Ireland.

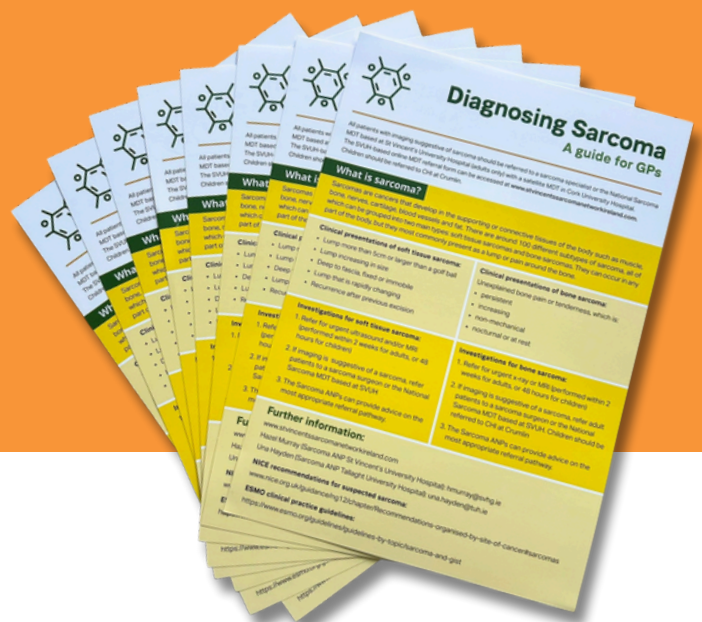
[You can read the full Annual Report here!](#)

Advocacy updates

GPs are often the first clinicians who will see a sarcoma patient before they are diagnosed. Most GPs will only encounter one sarcoma patient in their entire career and often times the early symptoms are not recognised, or dismissed as something else. This can delay diagnosis, which can then lead to reduced treatment options and a poorer prognosis.

Teaching GPs about the early symptoms of sarcoma was our advocacy priority project this year, and we are pleased to report that we successfully achieved our goal!

Together with the sarcoma clinicians in St Vincent's University Hospital, we developed a flyer to highlight common sarcoma symptoms and outline the referral pathway within the health system to ensure that both adult and pediatric patients were referred to the correct clinics in a timely manner. This GP Toolkit was printed and sent to all GP practices in the Republic of Ireland - over 1700 clinics.



News

Promoting GP awareness of sarcoma

Sarcoma is a rare cancer that develops in the supporting or connective tissues of the body such as muscle, bone, nerves, cartilage, blood vessels and fat.

It accounts for 1% of all cancers diagnosed, with 300 diagnoses in Ireland annually. The most common symptom is a lump that is growing in size, but these are often mistaken for harmless cysts or lipomas.

If the tumour is not visible, it will present as unexplained, recurring pain and this is often mistaken for muscle strain and sports injuries.

The national charity Sarcoma Cancer Ireland offers support, education and advocacy to empower patients and their families in their fight against this rare cancer. See www.sarcoma.ie

The support group has stressed that all patients with imaging suggestive of sarcoma should be referred to a sarcoma specialist or the National Sarcoma MDT based at St Vincent's University Hospital (SVUH) in Dublin (adults only) with a satellite MDT in Cork University Hospital. The SVUH-based online MDT referral form can be accessed at www.stvincentsarcomanetworkireland.com

Children should be referred to CHI at Crumlin. Sarcoma Cancer Ireland has produced an information leaflet which has been sent to GPs. Copies are available by email: education@sarcoma.ie

Clinical guidelines on sarcoma are available on the NICE and ESMO websites www.nice.org.uk and www.esmo.org

In addition, stories were published in the "Forum Journal", a monthly industry magazine that is sent to all registered GPs in Ireland. The GP Toolkit flyer is available to download from our website, and medical clinics can order hardprinted copies to be sent to them, free of charge.

Visit www.sarcoma.ie for further details.



Achievements and Highlights in 2025

The Sunflower Ball 2025

On 4th October Sarcoma Cancer Ireland hosted the annual Sunflower Ball at the Newgrange Hotel in Navan. It was a night filled with community, joy, and incredible generosity. The event brought together patients, families, supporters, and friends to celebrate strength, raise awareness, and honour those affected by sarcoma. The room was filled with warmth, connection, and a shared sense of purpose that truly reflected the heart of our community.



Thanks to the amazing support of everyone who attended, donated, sponsored prizes, or contributed in any way, the night was a tremendous success. We are delighted to share that the total raised was €14,258.10, all of which will go directly towards providing counselling, support groups, financial assistance, advocacy, and essential services for sarcoma patients and their families across Ireland.



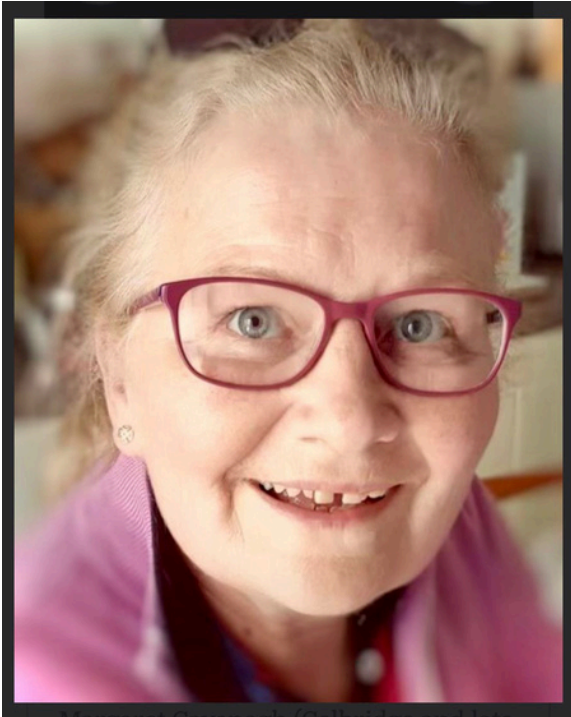
We were honoured to present this year's Sarcoma Spirit Awards:

- **Deirdre Lawlor Award: Aoife Owens**
- **Margaret Cavanagh Award: Aisling Murphy**

The Sunflower Ball continues to shine as a meaningful celebration of hope, remembrance, and community, and we are truly grateful to everyone who made this night possible.



The Margaret Cavanagh Award



We were honoured to dedicate the award for healthcare staff in memory of **Margaret Cavanagh, Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS)** at Cappagh National Orthopaedic Hospital.

Margaret's care made the journey lighter for so many sarcoma patients & their families over many years. She was a legend within the sarcoma community with patients treated at Cappagh - honest, fiery, but ever so kind.

Margaret's compassion and efficiency made her a role model for colleagues - truly epitomising what compassionate care should look like.

We were terribly sorry to hear of Margaret's passing in July 2023, and we were honoured to have Donna & Emma from Ottobock join us at the Sunflower Ball, to share memories of Margaret.

This Sarcoma Spirit Award is named in honour of our dear friend Deirdre, who passed away in February after an incredibly courageous journey with sarcoma.

Deirdre was like a mother figure to us all, so kind and caring and always the first to welcome new patients to our support group. When we decided to establish an official charity, Deirdre was one of the first people to step forward and volunteer her time. She was the only person who had actual board experience, and this brought incredible insight into how we shaped our charity. Her expert advice is reflected in our core structure and policies, which are central to our ongoing work.

Once the charity was established, Deirdre stepped back from her role so she could spend more time with her beloved husband Billy, daughters Emma and Claire, and her 5 grandchildren.

Although she is gone, her memory and legacy remain. She is greatly missed and will forever be remembered by all who had the privilege of being in her company.

The Deirdre Lawlor Award



Patient Information Day

Our annual Patient Information Day was held on Saturday 26th July in Dublin and was well attended by patients and carers from all around the country. Our guest speakers included patients, doctors and nurses from the National Sarcoma Team and our counsellors. It was a fantastic opportunity for patients to connect with each other and to learn about the support services offered by Sarcoma Cancer Ireland.



Liz's Garden of Giving

Liz's Garden of Giving blossomed beautifully this year, becoming one of the most heart-warming community efforts supporting Sarcoma Cancer Ireland. Over many months, Liz lovingly planted and nurtured countless pots, baskets, and arrangements, transforming her garden into a vibrant oasis. She then opened it to the public over two special days, inviting people to visit, donate, and take home the plants she had grown with such care. A cosy tent - manned by her wonderful family and friends - served teas and coffees, adding to the warm and welcoming atmosphere.

Thanks to Liz's dedication and the generosity of everyone who visited, an incredible €20,151 was raised. We are so grateful to Liz for her extraordinary effort and the joy she brings to our community.

www.sarcoma.ie

Garden of Giving

In Memory of Sadhbh Hogan - In Support of Sarcoma Cancer Ireland
 Join us in Liz's garden for a special charity event.

Date: 6th and 7th June, 10am - 5pm
Address: 27 The Paddocks, Naas, W91 HXK1

In June 2020, I lost my beautiful daughter Sadhbh to Sarcoma cancer. Shortly before she died, she encouraged me to use my love of gardening to help others.

I've potted up hanging baskets, window boxes, patio pots, sunflowers, and a wide variety of perennials - something for everyone who loves flowers.

How it works:
 Come browse the garden, choose a pot to take home, enjoy tea/coffee, cake and a chat, and make a donation.

Your support will help Sarcoma Cancer Ireland make a difference in the lives of families affected by this rare cancer.

Donations
 In person on the day, or online via the QR code



Big Yellow Picnic 2025

This July, families and communities across Ireland joined in our **Big Yellow Picnic**: a unique, at-home event where everyone could take part, from their own gardens, parks, or local green spaces.

Participants received bright yellow picnic packs from us, filled with everything needed for a sunny, cheerful day. Blankets were laid out, sandwiches were enjoyed, laughter filled the air, and special moments were shared, all while raising awareness of sarcoma and supporting the vital services of Sarcoma Cancer Ireland.

We are so grateful to everyone who hosted a picnic, shared photos, and donated to the cause. Every picnic helped fund counselling, support groups, financial assistance, and resources for sarcoma patients and their families across Ireland.

The Big Yellow Picnic is more than just a fun day. It's a nationwide celebration of hope, connection, and generosity, showing what we can achieve when we come together, even from our own backyards.



Step it Up for Sarcoma — September Challenge



Throughout the month of September, supporters from across Ireland took part in our Step it Up for Sarcoma challenge, committing to walk (or roll!) one mile per day, at their own pace and in their own communities.

The goal was simple but powerful: every step raises vital funds to support people affected by sarcoma. Our community truly stepped up in a big way.

VHI Women's Mini Marathon

This year, a host of our amazing ladies laced up their runners and took on the VHI Women's Mini Marathon in support of Sarcoma Cancer Ireland.

They walked, jogged, and ran the 10km route with incredible spirit, many in honour of loved ones, and all with the goal of raising awareness and vital funds for our services.

Their dedication, energy, and solidarity made for a truly inspiring day. We are so grateful to every woman who joined **Team Sarcoma** and proudly wore **yellow** through the streets of Dublin.

Thank you for going the distance for our sarcoma community.



The Butterfly Guard Documentary

We were honoured to be included in **"The Butterfly Guard"** a powerful documentary about Ella, a young sarcoma patient, and the incredible support shown to her and her family. Ella's brother and partner are members of the jiu-jitsu club Strange Wolves, and although Ella wasn't part of the club herself, the team rallied around them during her treatment. Their special fundraising event, The Royal Rumble, helped raise vital funds to support Ella on her journey. In addition, a preview screening of the documentary raised an amazing €1,403 for Sarcoma Cancer Ireland. We are incredibly grateful to Ella, her family, and the entire Strange Wolves community for their generosity, compassion, and commitment to raising awareness of sarcoma.





Community Fundraisers Across Ireland

This year, we were deeply moved by the incredible community fundraisers held in support of Sarcoma Cancer Ireland. People from all over the country came together in the most meaningful ways — each event a powerful reminder of the compassion and solidarity within our sarcoma community.

One of the standout events was **Curls for Sarcoma**, where supporters came together to raise vital funds while spreading awareness in a fun and uplifting way. The event brought people together in true community spirit and made a real impact for families affected by sarcoma.

We were also incredibly proud of **Claire and Charlie**, who took on the **Cork City Mini Marathon**, running in honour of loved ones and in support of sarcoma patients and families across Ireland. Their determination, strength, and commitment were truly inspiring.

One beautiful soul chose to mark her 70th birthday by asking for donations in lieu of gifts, all in memory of her beloved son David. Her generosity, and the kindness of those who contributed, touched us all.

Across Ireland, others stepped up with workplace **soccer tournaments**, marathon runs, and **sporting challenges** — each one helping to raise awareness and vital funds for the support services we provide.

If you're planning a sporting challenge, marathon, or community fundraiser in 2026, we would love you to keep Sarcoma Cancer Ireland in mind. Your support helps us make a real difference.

To everyone who organised, participated, donated, or cheered from the sidelines: thank you. Your efforts make a real and lasting difference.



Looking Ahead to 2026

As our community continues to grow, we are working behind the scenes to expand and strengthen our services. Follow us on social media to stay updated and be the first to learn about new supports as they are launched.



#SeedsForSarcoma Returns

Our much-loved Seeds for Sarcoma campaign will be returning in 2026. This heartfelt initiative encourages people of all ages to plant seeds and share their growing journey, symbolising hope, resilience, and new beginnings.

We can't wait to see gardens, windowsills, and school projects across Ireland once again filled with colour, and stories of strength.

Camino Walk - September 2026

In September 2026, a group of incredible supporters will take on a Camino walk in aid of Sarcoma Cancer Ireland. This meaningful journey is about more than just distance. It's about reflection, remembrance, connection, and hope.

Participants will walk in honour of those affected by sarcoma, while raising vital funds to support counselling, support groups, and practical assistance for patients and families across Ireland.

If you are interested in joining the Camino Walk, please contact us at: fundraising@sarcoma.ie for more details.



Christmas at Sarcoma Cancer Ireland

The festive season is upon us, and what better way to spread kindness than by choosing gifts that make a real difference. This year, our Christmas Shop is filled with thoughtful items that support patients and families affected by sarcoma.

- Socks from Sox Bomb Ireland: Back again by popular demand! Our cosy, high-quality socks come in Christmas-themed packaging and are suitable for all ages. A lovely, affordable gift that gives back.
- Sarcoma Christmas Cards: Share a little brightness this season with our thoughtfully designed Christmas cards. Every pack helps us continue providing essential services to patients and families across Ireland.
- 2026 Nature & Wildlife Calendar: Featuring stunning Irish wildlife and landscape photography by Suzanne Behan, our 2026 calendar is packed with beautiful imagery to inspire you all year round.



Our Christmas Shop is open, browse the full collection and shop online today: sarcoma.ie/shop

Thank you for supporting us this Christmas. Your kindness brings hope to families when they need it most.



Volunteer Opportunities

@sarcomacancerireland

Volunteers are the heart of Sarcoma Cancer Ireland

Join Our Team of Volunteers

- Make a difference
- Share your skills
- Support and empower others

Express your interest today!

Thank you for being part of the Sarcoma Cancer Ireland community. Your support, compassion, and belief in what we do mean more than words can say, and as we look ahead, we're so grateful to continue this journey together — supporting one another, raising awareness, and building hope for the future.

Carol Haslam
Operation Lead

