



L to r: Seamus, Jacqueline and Michael Daly. East Galway & Midlands (EG&M) Cancer Support, a voluntary service was established in 2009 by Jacqueline and Michael

Cost of community-based cancer support revealed

By Valerie Ryan  8th June 2020

Voluntary support services for cancer survivors estimated at over €1,100 per person annually

The total economic cost of providing a voluntary support service to cancer survivors is €313,744 annually or €1,138 per person per year, estimates the first ever study of the cost of cancer care provided by a community-based cancer support service.

With an estimated 40 voluntary cancer support services across Ireland, the study examined one service, East Galway & Midlands (EG&M) Cancer Support, to quantify for the first time the true cost of providing these services, services that prove crucial to many who experience a cancer diagnosis.

The long-term sustainability of a voluntary cancer centre is uncertain due to its reliance on donations and volunteers, according to the University College Cork (UCC) study.

The study conducted in a month period from 2018-19, is described as the first of its kind for Ireland and rare internationally.

The researchers believe the findings can be used to inform future planning of cancer supportive care services, establishing links between tertiary and community based centres, and cost-effectiveness analyses, nationally and internationally.

It analysed data from the EG&M centre detailing the type and frequency of services provided, and the true economic cost of those services then was estimated using equivalent health sector salary scales and prices.

Annually, the centre provides more than 4,000 appointments to cancer patients and their families. Support centres, such as the EG&M Cancer Support, are made possible primarily through fundraising, charitable donations, and volunteers.

The analysis also highlights that as rates of cancer in Ireland are set to rise, so too are the increased costs of delivering the services. The study incorporated a scenario analysis to estimate such costs. For example, if uptake were to increase to 20 per cent, from the current level of 8 per cent, the total cost to provide this service would increase to €429,043 per year.

There are 200,000 cancer survivors in Ireland, representing 4 per cent of the population.

Community-based centres offer a range of services and interventions free of charge to cancer patients and their families.

“This study places the economic microscope on one cancer support service so we can magnify the contribution they make in our society,” stated **Dr Frances Drummond**, co-author of the study, ‘A cost analysis of a community-based support centre for cancer patients and their families in Ireland: the EVECANs study’.

The study results revealed the most frequently used services were transport to treatment (20% of service users), complementary therapies (48% of service users), exercise classes (10% of service users) and counselling (9% of service users).

The study, published in *Supportive Care in Cancer*, has been highlighted today (June 8) to coincide with Cancer Survivorship Week.

It was funded by Breakthrough Cancer Research and completed by Dr Aileen Murphy, Senior Lecturer Department of Economics, Cork University Business School, University College Cork; and Dr Frances Drummond, (Senior Research Fellow, CancerResearch@UCC, University College Cork; Research Officer, Breakthrough Cancer Research) with assistance from Ryan W Chu, student in College of Medicine and Health, University College Cork.

valerie.ryan@imt.ie

SHARE



Facebook

Twitter



LinkedIn



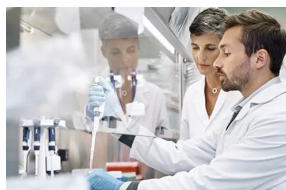
Email

Tagged with: [CANCER](#) [CANCER PATIENTS](#) [CANCER SURVIVORSHIP WEEK](#) [COMMUNITY-BASED CANCER SUPPORT](#) [ONCOLOGY](#) [SUPPORTIVE CARE IN CANCER](#)

RECOMMENDED ARTICLES



Immunotherapy before surgery improves lung cancer survival – Irish research



Cancer Trials Ireland urges patients “Don’t Be Shy – Just Ask!”



OncoAssure announces US launch of novel prostate cancer prognostic test at AUA 2025



JOB



General Practitioner, General Medical Services Scheme, Co. Monaghan



Executive Medical Director – Antrim Hospital

CLASSIFIEDS



Salaried Assistant GP Required – Co. Roscommon