

Your Marie Curie



Marie
Curie

*"We help people carry on living
their life as well as they can,
for as long as possible."*

Nurse Jenna

Here's what's inside:

**The ray of sunshine:
Jyoti's story**

Page 4

**Hiking boots, on.
Trails, conquered.**

Page 10

Winter 2025

Welcome

Contents

- 3 Shine bright in glorious yellow
- 4-5 The ray of sunshine
- 6 You helped Barbara and Phil maintain their independence
- 7 By your side
- 8 John and Julie's perfect day
- 9 Alan's legacy lives on
- 10 Hiking boots, on. Trails, conquered.
- 11 A huge thanks to our star supporters!

You cared for Northern Ireland

Welcome to the 2025 edition of *Your Marie Curie*! I'm so pleased to be starting the year off by writing to you. I hope you'll join me in reflecting on all the incredible support you've given in the last year. Thank you for helping to bring kindness and care to people all over Northern Ireland.

This year, we're determined to reach more people than ever before. We get just one chance to make the end of life kinder for people – wherever they are, whatever the illness. It's so important that we can be there for them.

The Great Daffodil Appeal is our chance to come together and make that happen. Collections will be happening in Tesco stores on 7 and 8 March. Keep an eye out for our lovely volunteers or, if you'd like, join them! We're always looking for more kind people to help us raise vital funds.

Enjoy the stories in this edition. And remember, your support makes it all possible.



Ciara Gallagher

Ciara Gallagher
Head of Fundraising, Northern Ireland

Shine bright in glorious yellow

Photo: Our wonderful, smiley volunteers collecting for the Great Daffodil Appeal

Spring has almost sprung, and you know what that means – the Great Daffodil Appeal is nearly here! Time for volunteers to put on our iconic yellow hat, spread some smiles, and raise vital funds to help our nurses be there for people at the end of life.

There's still time to join the thousands of volunteers taking to high streets and supermarkets up and down the country. **Just two hours**

of your time could raise £85 – enough for almost four hours of expert end of life care. Plus, you'll meet new people, get out and about, and be part of something incredible.

We're also thrilled to announce that the Kingsbridge Foundation is supporting us this March. As part of their 'Bloom to Your Room' initiative they will be offering daffodils to patients, raising awareness and fundraising for Marie Curie.



Search **'Marie Curie collect'** to find a collection near you, or call **0800 716 146**

Photo: Jyoti smiling
in the sunshine

The ray of sunshine

*"I like to say that I am a collector of many things.
As well as key rings and stamps, I collect diseases."*

I have pulmonary fibrosis, mixed connective tissue disorder and pulmonary hypertension. There is no cure. During the pandemic I felt like I had been abandoned. My mental health

was really bad, and I was offered care as an outpatient at a Marie Curie hospice.

As soon as you hear hospice, you hear end of life, and you're automatically scared.

But the Marie Curie Hospice, West Midlands, was so peaceful. I think people don't realise that **hospices aren't just for the end of life** – they're here to help people with life-limiting conditions live the life they have left to the fullest.

When you're on the journey to the end, you need to feel like you have somewhere you can go that feels safe. That's how Marie Curie feels for me. I also get hospice care at home, and my nurse Jenna comes out to me every month and does check-ups. She also supports my husband and my mai (mum). I know that if anything happened to me, they would be safe. I think that's the biggest thing that I could ask for.

Last year, I organised a fundraiser for the hospice called Chit-Chaat.

I painted teapots to go with the design theme, and sold homemade samosas and some of my art. It was amazing to support the place that had helped me so much.

My little nephews Alfie and Jack are my absolute lifelines. I never imagined two tiny people could make me dream again. But those little boys have magic in them. They're everything to me.

Before, life was lost and scary and very unpredictable. It's still unpredictable, but I'm not scared of it now that I know there's a safe place for me to go.

*"Now, I've got a new motto:
When the world knocks
you off your feet, roll over
and look at the stars."*

Supporters like you make care like this possible. We all only have one chance at life and, together, we can help more people like Jyoti live their lives to the fullest.

Photo: Jyoti with nurse Jenna
Credit: Tegan James

You helped Barbara and Phil maintain their independence

"If I ask Phil a question, he can say yes or no, but he can't have a conversation," says Barbara. Phil, Barbara's husband and former postie, has Huntington's disease. Barry, a Marie Curie Companion at Home volunteer, visits Phil for three hours a week.

"My visits are about Phil being able to see a different face, and to give Barbara some respite."



"Phil likes his Guinness, so, if the weather's good, I take him in his wheelchair down to the local pub and he has a drink. If the weather isn't so good, we'll do something together like playing dominoes."

"It's a release for me," Barbara tells us.

"Barry's visits are good for my mental health. They're as much for me as they are for Phil really. I get to have a couple of hours out knowing that Phil is safe and happy with Barry."

Barbara, Phil's wife

Thank you for making the Marie Curie Companion service possible for people like Barbara and Phil.

Photo: Phil, right, with his companion Barry, left

By your side

Life can be overwhelming, and we all need a helping hand sometimes. Whether it's coming with you to appointments, being there to listen, or stepping in so you or your loved ones can take a break, Marie Curie Companions are there for you.

We offer completely free emotional and practical support - at home, in hospital or over the phone.

And if you don't need support now, there's always the chance to become a companion volunteer yourself. It's an incredible opportunity to make a new friend or give back to your community.

Photo: Phil during one of his visits with Barry



Winter 2025

If you need support, we're here for you: mariecurie.org.uk/help/companions

Find out more about becoming a volunteer here: mariecurie.org.uk/help/helper-volunteers/become-a-helper

John and Julie's perfect day



"It was such a joyous occasion – I got to marry the woman I love," says John, a patient at Marie Curie Hospice, Glasgow. In June, Carol, the hospice Chaplain, organised a wedding for John and his partner Julie.

"I couldn't believe the hospice would do that for us. Initially I thought that you just went into the hospice to die, but it's not that at all. The staff go the extra mile and then some. They've been my safety net.

"Julie and I wanted an intimate wedding with just close friends and the 'extended family' – which is how I now refer to the hospice staff. Carol made it as intimate and special as possible. They managed to give us a proper reality TV show style wedding. We felt like total stars.

"All the nurses and some of the other patients and their families threw the confetti. It was very emotional. It will remain special for as long as we have left. They made the day perfect for us and we will never forget it. I'm determined to embrace life – with Julie – while I still can."

Sadly, John died in November in the Marie Curie Hospice, Glasgow. We send our sincere condolences to Julie and their family.

Julie and John couldn't have said 'I do' without you. Thank you for making their perfect day possible.

Photo credit: John Clark Photos

Alan's legacy lives on

Diane struggled to care for her husband Alan towards the end of his life. That's why she's including a gift in her Will – to make sure that others have the support and care they need to make it through the hardest times.

"I don't know how people do it for so long, caring. I did it for six months and that nearly killed me. It was so hard. You don't sleep properly. We weren't living, we were existing. I've never felt so tired in all my life.

"Alan didn't cope very well with his illness. But Marie Curie were there for us. Even in the middle of the night, because everything is worse in the middle of the night, isn't it?

"What would I have done if I hadn't had Marie Curie there? I really don't know. They saved my sanity towards the end. That's why I wanted to leave a legacy gift."

"If we all know we're going to have the help we need at the end, it makes it easier."



Photo: Alan with his dog

More than a quarter of the care our nurses give is thanks to gifts in Wills. Visit mariecurie.org.uk/willtalk to find out more and get your free Wills guide.

Photo: Our amazing hikers and volunteers celebrating

Hiking boots, on. Trails, conquered.

Ready for a challenge? Beat the Trails is launching a series of awe-inspiring treks across some of the UK's most iconic scenery, and we'd love to see you there. Whether you're a seasoned hiker or a first-time trekker, there's a distance, and a starting line, for you. This year's events are:

- Beat the Mournes, Northern Ireland
- Beat Hadrian's Wall, North East
- Beat the Gower Coast, South Wales
- Beat the 13 Tors, South West

Stunning scenery, our support team cheering you on, and a glass of bubbly at the finish line. What's not to love? And you'll be raising vital funds to support Marie Curie Nurses.

Your sponsorship pledge of £207 could pay for nine hours of overnight care, so we can be there for people when it matters most.

If hiking isn't your cup of tea, we'd be so thankful if you'd join us as a volunteer and help cheer on our incredible hikers.

Get £5 off your registration fee with the code BEAT25, valid until 28 February 2025.

Find out more at: mariecurie.org.uk/beat-the-trails

Email: beat-the-trails@mariecurie.org.uk

Phone: 0800 716 146

BEAT THE TRAILS

A huge thanks to our star supporters!



Lisa Millar and her family organised a walk around Portstewart in memory of their beloved granny, raising an incredible **£1,827**.



Thank you to Orla McCooey from Whitecross, whose joyous 50th birthday celebrations raised **£1,650**.

Archie Kelly from Draperstown took on the epic challenge of climbing Croagh Patrick on his 70th birthday, and raised an amazing **£3,612**.

None of our work would be possible without our supporters. Whether you're a baker, bowler, walker or climber – thank you.

A huge thank you to Noreen Mc Dermott and Oonagh Martin for organising the Omagh Spin, and raising an amazing **£6,283**.



Hear from the experts

Research is vital to improving end of life care. Your support makes the research we do possible, and we'd love to share it with you.

We'd be thrilled if you'd join us virtually at the **Marie Curie Research into Practice Conference** from 11 to 14 February 2025, for sessions covering research on:

- Supporting the physical and mental health and well-being of people affected by terminal illness
- Ending financial insecurity at the end of life
- Ensuring equal access to the best care and support for all
- Support for people affected by dying, death and bereavement, including family, friends and carers

It's free and open to all. If you can't make it to the live session, we'll record everything, so you can watch it at a time that suits you. To access, just make sure you register before the big event.



Photo: A Marie Curie researcher attending the conference



Register for free today at mariecurie.ivent-pro.com/events/research-conference-2025/login



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**



**Marie
Curie**