

# HEART OF THE MATER

*Look at the lifesaving difference you make!*

*Autumn Newsletter 2022*

## New ICU set to open next spring – thanks to you!



Your kindness meant Carol received lifesaving care in the ICU.

## Carol's message to you: "You saved my life, you got me home to my baby girl."

**You've helped fund lifesaving equipment that the new ICU simply couldn't open without. With this equipment, the expanded ICU will almost double the number of patients, that the Mater can care for. Thank you for your kindness towards patients like Carol.**

When Carol was brought to the Mater's ICU, fighting to breathe, her doctor was getting ready to wheel out the ECMO machine, if she needed it.

*“ I felt like I had a tonne of bricks sitting on my chest. ”*

Carol's lungs had been damaged from Covid. As she grasped for every breath, she worried not only for her own life, but for the life of her unborn baby.

An ECMO is the single most

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Work starts on the Family Comfort Care Suite



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"Ben has saved us." A mother's story



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Climbing Croagh Patrick for Kathleen



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Will you help fund vital hospital equipment?



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important machine in the ICU. It's a patient's last chance, and a doctor's last option, when every other measure has failed.

To get the expanded ICU up and running, we needed to equip it with a new ECMO machine.

Thanks to your amazing generosity, we've been able to purchase vital ICU equipment, including the ECMO. The work to get the expanded ICU up and running is underway.

More patients like Carol will have you to thank for the lifesaving care they receive.

*“We had such an incredible response from the appeal. I'm so grateful that kind people like you supported it. I will also always be grateful to*



“You learn to really enjoy the smallest things in life.” Carol at home celebrating with 11-month-old Lucy.

*Dr. O'Loughlin and his team for all they've done for me. I feel the support and care that I was given is what makes me so strong today. Thank you so much!”*

### What does a bigger ICU mean?

- ▶ Treatment for patients whose care has been deferred or affected over the last two years
- ▶ Doctors able to plan lifesaving surgeries knowing that ICU beds will be available for their patients to recover
- ▶ Immediate care for patients who arrive needing emergency treatment, such as car accident victims

***Thank you for helping equip the expanded ICU, and for ensuring more critically ill patients like Carol receive the lifesaving care they need.***



Construction of the expanded ICU is underway. Thanks to your generosity, it will open in Spring 2023.

## New Family Comfort Care Suite in the works – because of you!



Ann says, “I can never thank people like you enough. You helped give my mam the gift of a peaceful passing.”

**Thank you for giving dignity and compassion to patients when they need it most. Your generosity last Christmas is making all the difference for families like Ann's.**

Thank you for reading Ann's story last Christmas, and for giving so generously to fund the building of a new Family Comfort Care Suite in the Mater.

Diarmuid O'Coimin, the Mater's End of Life Care Co-ordinator, asked us to share this message with you:

*“We really appreciate your kindness and compassion. Your generous gifts are helping provide a private space for patients and their families to spend those last precious moments together.”*

***Thank you for making sure families like Ann's get the care we all deserve.***

### You helped fund two new ECHO Machines

**Thanks to you, we can save more lives with vital new ECHO machines.**

These portable ECHOs allow doctors and cardiac physiologists to monitor heart patients right at their bedside.

These lifesaving machines take ultrasound pictures of a patient's heart. Having these ECHOs mean patients can be closely monitored by doctors and cardiac physiologists, aiding their recovery.

Because of your support, we can keep up with the demand for ECHO scans and keep providing the best possible care.

***Your generous and giving heart will save more lives – thank you.***



Cardiac Physiologist, Ana, with the new ECHO machine — made possible by you.



# “Because of you, my life and Alfie’s are safe.”

**Alma Murray, whose eldest son Ben passed away suddenly after cardiac arrest in 2016.**

## “There aren’t enough words to thank you.” – How you helped save Alma and son Alfie’s lives.

- ▶ Ben passed away suddenly at the age of 13 from a rare and undiagnosed arrhythmic heart condition.
- ▶ Friends, team mates and family, joined to create a memorial jersey for Ben, and raise money for the Mater.
- ▶ Through the Family Heart Screening Clinic that you’ve supported, Ben’s mum and little brother have been saved.



Ben loved playing rugby from a young age. After he died, his family learned he was being scouted for the Leinster squad.

At six feet, Ben was tall for his 13 years. He loved playing rugby, football and hurling.

Described by his mum, Alma, as a ‘happy and healthy boy’, Ben had only started secondary school the September before.

Growing up, there was never any sign that anything was wrong with Ben. He was strong and healthy, and rarely got sick.

But life for the family took a tragic turn on New Year’s Eve in 2016.

“After a takeaway dinner, Ben got up from the table and said he didn’t feel well. I said the same. ‘We’re never



Ben’s first day in secondary school. “He loved the whole idea of secondary, different classes, and meeting people.”

getting food from there again!’ They were the last words I spoke to Ben. He went off into the playroom to play on his Xbox.

I brought his younger brother Alfie down to shower him. Then I went into the playroom to call Ben to take his shower.

I found Ben unresponsive, sitting on the couch. ”

Alma rang the ambulance. Ben’s dad performed CPR. But it was too late. Ben had passed away by the time he arrived in hospital.

The family were referred to the Mater’s Family Heart Screening Clinic, where doctors performed ECHO, ECG, and stress tests. They also arranged for samples of Ben’s heart to be sent for genetic analysis.

“My husband’s and Alfie’s tests came back normal.

But the stress test showed I had irregularities in my heartbeat. Dr. McGorrian pinpointed CPVT, a rare type of heart arrhythmia that may be the cause. She was concerned and put me on medication straightaway. She had that insight. ”

Test results from Ben’s heart samples revealed he had the gene specific to CPVT. Follow-up genetic testing showed both Alma and Alfie also had the gene.

Alma was devastated.

“Losing Ben to it, knowing that now Alfie has it, and the fear of losing him... it was like another kick in the stomach. ”

But thanks to kind people like you, who’ve helped fund vital equipment for the Family Heart Screening Clinic, Alma and Alfie are on heart medication.

And a year ago, Alfie got fitted with a device that monitors his heart rate, and sends the information to his medical team in his local children’s hospital.

Alma is grateful for the Family Heart Screening Clinic, and for amazing supporters like you.

“Dr. McGorrian was amazing from day one. The Family Heart Screening Clinic, and the Mater Foundation, I can never thank them enough. Thank you just never seems enough. It just seems so little to show our appreciation of what they have done for us. ”



Through the Family Heart Screening Clinic, Alma and her youngest son Alfie were diagnosed with the same condition that took Ben’s life.

**In 2019 and 2020, 337 new families were supported at the Family Heart Screening Clinic. Families like Alma’s will continue to depend on this lifesaving service, and support like yours.**



**“I’ll never forget the incredible way that the ICU staff looked after Kathleen in her final days.”**



Kathleen got five years after her lung transplant at the Mater, and made the most of it. This is how your generosity makes a difference.

- ▶ **Kathleen’s family climbed Croagh Patrick in her memory and raised over €7,000 for the Mater.**
- ▶ **More families are choosing to keep their loved one’s memory alive with an honorary gift, or a gift in their Will.**

In 2016, Kathleen Moore got a lung transplant in the Mater, and a new lease on life.

Noel, Kathleen's husband, says *“we went everywhere, and ten months after her transplant, we climbed Croagh Patrick.”*

Kathleen had five more years after her transplant – and got to go on many more adventures.

But by 2021, she began having trouble with her kidneys, and was put on dialysis. By then, she sadly had little time left, as Noel shared.

*“On Sunday morning, we got a phone call that things weren’t good. We were able to get the whole family up to the hospital. She passed away then, that Sunday evening.”*

Noel remembers the care the Mater gave to Kathleen and the family.

*“The staff in the ICU were absolutely incredible, the way they looked after us and her.”*

On the 12th of March this year, Noel and his family, including his children and grandchildren, climbed Croagh Patrick again. They climbed in honour of Kathleen, and to raise funds for the doctors and nurses in the Mater who cared for her right to the end. Care made possible by you.



“Doing the climb was very emotional, and a lot of tears were shed. But we had great laughs as well”, says Kathleen’s husband, Noel.

***If you’d like to honour a special person in your life with a gift today. Or, if you’d like to talk to us about leaving a gift in your Will, please contact our Chief Executive, Mary Moorhead, directly on 01 830 3482 or [mmoorhead@materfoundation.ie](mailto:mmoorhead@materfoundation.ie).***

**To our caring community of Monthly Supporters we say a BIG THANK YOU!**



You are helping the healthcare team at the Mater save lives through your ongoing and regular support.

**Day by day, you are helping build the hospital of the future.**

We are humbled and thankful for the support you show to the Mater.

I hope you know the extraordinary impact you have on patients who come through the doors of the Mater every day. People like Carol are alive today, and grateful for the lifesaving care you make possible.

Thank you so much, from the patients, the staff, and all of us in the Mater Foundation, for your commitment and dedication to transforming the Mater into a world-class hospital.

***If you would like to discuss your monthly giving, please contact us on 01 803 2060. Or if you are someone who’s interested in joining our community of dedicated monthly givers, please see the back of your reply form.***

**This is YOUR CHANCE to make your kindness go further**

**A small reminder about tax relief.**

Did you know that if you donate €250 or more to the Mater Foundation in a calendar year, we can claim at least €112 in tax relief on your generous gifts from Revenue?

This is vital money we can put towards making the Mater into the hospital you deserve.

This is your opportunity to make your kindness go even further. To fund more lifesaving equipment and to save and care for more patients.

***Want to know more about tax relief or find out if you're eligible? Contact Eleanor on 01 803 2060 or [emhughes@materfoundation.ie](mailto:emhughes@materfoundation.ie)***

# Lifesaving equipment we need YOUR HELP to fund for patients and staff at the Mater

**As you can probably guess, lifesaving hospital machines come with a big price tag.**

Any size gift you can send today will go toward purchasing these vital pieces of equipment the Mater needs to save lives.



## **CRRT Machines (5 needed)**

**€20,602 each**

**Total Cost: €103,012**

Continuous Renal Replacement Therapy (CRRT) provides 24/7 treatment to critically ill patients suffering acute kidney injury.

This machine cleans the blood in the kidneys and removes toxins. Without it, patients are at higher risk of kidney failure, and death.



## **Patient 'Essentials' Pack (300 needed)**

**€50 each**

**Total Cost: €15,000 per year**

These packs contain clothing, sanitary and other essential items that the Social Work Department provides for patients who either can't afford them or who are unable to access their belongings.



## **Liver Ultrasound Machine for Theatre (1 needed)**

**Cost: €43,400**

Currently the Mater has only one of these machines in its theatres. A second machine would allow twice as many liver surgeries to be carried out, reducing waiting times for patients.



## **Therapy Chairs for Dialysis Patients (3 needed)**

**€4,797 each**

**Total cost: €14,391**

These specially designed chairs provide maximum comfort and help reduce pain and fatigue for patients undergoing dialysis treatment.

***Will you send a gift today to help fund  
a vital piece of hospital equipment?***

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**EMAIL:** [contact@materfoundation.ie](mailto:contact@materfoundation.ie)

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