



c/o Care Alliance Ireland, Coleraine House, Coleraine Street, Dublin 7, Ireland
T+353 1 874 7776 / E info@carersweek.ie / W www.carersweek.ie FB; NationalCarersWeek

PRESS RELEASE: (Monday 8th June – 00.01 am embargo)

IRELAND'S 391,260ⁱ FAMILY CARERS BEING SUPPORTED BY CHARITY PARTNERS TO MAKE CARING VISIBLE

Ireland's family carers are this week being encouraged to participate in events in the first ever virtual National Carers Week, which is taking place online from June 8 to 14. All events this year are online and virtual, and include Twitter chats, online quizzes, virtual yoga, bingo, messages from charity leaders and celebrities, and launches of new online resources for family carers.

Recent researchⁱⁱ points to the challenges experienced by many family carers as they grapple with the withdrawal of support services as a result of the pandemic. Family carers are, however, demonstrating resilience.

Dympna Tully, from Roscommon, who cares for her dad said:

“Almost to the day 10 years ago I took on the role of Daddy’s full time carer, I was lucky to have mammy’s guidance for them first few weeks before she started to get very ill but before I had a chance to adjust mammy passed & it was just me and Daddy. My life at 26 years of age changed over night”

She went on to say:

“I can hold my head high and feel super proud of myself for all them sacrifices I made while a lot would have given up by now & I’m pretty sure mammy is super proud up there”

Liam O’Sullivan, Executive Director, Care Alliance Ireland, says carer visibility is vital if we as a community are to recognise and appreciate the care that family carers provide:

“Covid-19 has shown how reliant we are on families to care for people with disabilities and ageing relatives. As the lockdown measures are relaxed, family carers can hold their heads high and be proud of their efforts and resilience.

We now need to prioritise supporting them through more accessible home care and other essential supports that enable them to continue to care. This National Carers Week we are encouraging everyone across the country to help Make Care Visible and to show their appreciation for the work of family carers”

Ends.





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Notes to the Editor:

Family carers provide care and support to a person with a disability, chronic condition, mental health concern and/or long-term illness, in the person's own home. National Carers Week, now in its fourteenth year, is coordinated by Care Alliance Ireland in partnership with nine other leading Irish charities who support family carers: The Alzheimer Society, the Central Remedial Clinic (CRC), the Irish Cancer Society, the Disability Federation, MS Ireland, Acquired Brain Injury Ireland, the Irish Hospice Foundation, St. Michael's House, and Spina Bifida Hydrocephalus Ireland.

For more figures and data on family carers in Ireland see <https://www.carealliance.ie/userfiles/files/Infographic%20Family%20caring%20in%202020%20Final.pdf>

Details of the events taking place throughout National Carers Week are available at <http://www.carersweek.ie/events?county=ONLINE#searchresults>

Sustained media campaigns will be run throughout the week using the tags #MakingCaringVisible and #CarersWeek.

Family carer Dympna Tully and other family carers are available for media interviews.

For more information contact Liam O'Sullivan (087 207 3265) or email ndo@carealliance.ie

ⁱ Estimate of number of family carers in Ireland, October 2019. See https://www.carealliance.ie/userfiles/files/Research/Briefing_Papers/Oct_2019/BriefingPaper_Estimates_of_Family_Carers_in_Ireland_Oct2019.pdf

ⁱⁱ Caring through Covid, May 2020. See <https://familycarers.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Family-Carers-Ireland-Caring-Through-COVID.pdf>

