

# Palliative Care Week 2025 Impact Report. 'Living for Today, Planning for Tomorrow'



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## **Executive Summary**

Since 2013, the All Ireland Institute of Hospice and Palliative Care hosts the Palliative Care Week campaign across the island of Ireland in response to the growing need for increased awareness and better knowledge and understanding of palliative care across all corners of society and within communities. We also respond to the need for further education for those working in health services, particularly health and social care professionals working in settings where a general palliative care approach will benefit those they care for.

There are many misconceptions about palliative care which means people may not avail of palliative care services and are therefore potentially missing out on improved quality of life. Thus, we persist in our campaign to try and reach key audiences and breakdown and dispel the misconceptions.

Every year, we collaborate with our member organisations and wider stakeholders to build on past campaigns and design increasingly impactful campaigns. This year, in order to inform the

development of our campaign, we reviewed the learnings from research about the public's perceptions of palliative care and effective campaigns focussed on palliative care, and lessons from other countries that hold similar campaigns. See more details below.

The quote featured here was received following the 2025 campaign and it captures the essence of "why" this campaign matters and underpins the ongoing need for continued efforts. Working in close partnership with AIHPC's 27 member organisations and key stakeholders across the palliative care sector, as well as beyond, we aim to shift misconceptions through education and awareness.

“  
The events and activities throughout the week not only highlighted the importance of compassionate care but also strengthened awareness and understanding across our community. Your commitment to promoting education and engagement around palliative care has had a meaningful impact, ensuring more people recognise the value of dignity, comfort, and support at every stage of life.  
”



1 - 'Cicely and David', Palliative Care Week Dublin launch, The Lighthouse Cinema

In this report, we want to highlight the immense efforts made, through the proven power of collaboration, the broad range of activities that took place and share the impact achieved, and the learnings for future campaigns. The Institute believes in the benefit of shared learnings, and we hope this report can be helpful to others who wish to create a campaign, big or small, to raise awareness of a new initiative or service.

The breadth and volume of events that took place this year has surpassed our expectations with 114 events taking place throughout the week, showing the need and demand for this week in all our calendars. This growth is so encouraging, and we know that it will lead to greater understanding and awareness of palliative care. We, as a sector, should be proud of this successful campaign.

Karen Charnley, CEO, the All Ireland Institute of Hospice and Palliative Care.



2 - In this video, Karen announced the 2025 campaign and explained the significance of this week in raising awareness about the vital role of palliative care. [View here.](#)

## At a Glance

- 1 Photography Competition (**new for 2025**)
- 2 in-person planning workshops held in Dublin and Belfast
- 8 personal-experience videos produced and shared
- 114 events held across Ireland and Northern Ireland, double the number of 2024
- 170 media items across print, broadcast, and online
- 300 new followers to AIHPC social media channels- Significant online engagement: increased traffic to The Palliative Hub and strong social-media activity
- 12,000+ printed materials distributed (leaflets, posters, and social-media frames)
- Major political support North and South, including Taoiseach Micheál Martin, Minister Carroll MacNeill, Minister Nesbitt, and President Higgins

- €40,360 total investment delivering strong all-island impact (this total excludes the contribution of AIHPC's team)

## Desk-based Research

The All Ireland Institute of Hospice and Palliative Care has led an annual island-wide public awareness campaign about palliative care since 2013. As many people hold misconceptions about palliative care, they often do not access services that could improve their quality of life. The campaign aims to reach diverse audiences and dispel these misunderstandings so more people can benefit from palliative care. In 2025, we carried out desk-based research on the public's perceptions of palliative care and effective palliative care focussed campaigns from other countries. We reviewed research that showcases the public's perceptions about palliative care and took this into consideration when designing our own campaign. Second, we reviewed research that looks at the effectiveness of palliative care campaigns and finally, we looked at practical examples of what other countries are doing in relation to raising awareness of palliative care.

### **Main findings:**

- Public perceptions confirm that people associate palliative care with cancer and end-of-life only
- Social taboo in discussing death which is a barrier to engagement with palliative care and advance care planning
- Public spaces lack routine exposure to palliative care messaging
- Lack of visibility in primary care and broader community spaces
- According to research, effective campaigning addresses the following:
  - Campaigns are better received when they portray people with serious illness as active and resilient rather than passive or suffering
  - Messages that lack patient voices or overemphasized moments of joy were often rejected or misunderstood
  - Lack of culturally tailored campaigns results in poor uptake, especially in minority groups
  - Campaigns are more effective when they include patient voices, show agency and reflect real-life complexity

- Campaigns that do not reflect local or personal realities are often seen as irrelevant or unrealistic
- Trust is higher when doctors, community leaders or celebrities are the messengers
- Campaigns that over-emphasize positivity are seen as detached from reality and have less uptake

## Our Collaboration



3 - Belfast Workshop-NICVA, April

Strong collaboration is central to all the work that we do at AIIHPC and Palliative Care Week provides a key opportunity each year to show the strength of those collaborations and relationships with AIIHPC's 27 member organisations and all others who work with the Institute across the palliative care and wider health care services, along with charities and community organisations across the island of Ireland.

AIIHPC implements a co-design and collaborative approach with all stakeholders throughout the planning and execution of the campaign, aiming to support various activities and events. From the outset, AIIHPC actively engaged a broad range of stakeholders, holding in-person workshops in Dublin and Belfast with the Palliative Care Reference Group, as well as organising briefings with communications teams and representatives from AIIHPC's member organisations, the HSE

(Republic of Ireland), and the Public Health Agency and Department of Health Strategic Planning and Performance Group (Northern Ireland).

### **In-person Workshops**

Planning for the 2025 campaign commenced in January, initially setting dates and scoping for our in-person planning workshops that took place in Dublin and Belfast in March/April.

The in-person workshops provide us with an important opportunity to reconnect and re-engage with stakeholders, and combines people who previously engaged with the campaign, and new faces, including representatives from AIIHPC Palliative Care Week Reference Group, AIIHPC's Voices4Care volunteer group, and also people working in a range of other settings, such as nursing homes, libraries, etc.

The workshops are a very important part of the consultation process for the week and at the workshops, discussions took place and new ideas were put forward for the campaign including events, the campaign theme, promotional material.

### **Palliative Care Week Reference Group**

The Palliative Care Week Reference Group includes 202 individuals from AIIHPC's member organisations, AIIHPC Voices4Care volunteer group, the wider palliative care sector and charity sector. The role of the reference group members is to advise on the various elements and help to guide the direction of the campaign, including:

- Identifying messages which are representative of thinking across the sector
- Ensuring the campaign is reflective of the perspectives of people with palliative care needs and carers
- Ensuring the campaign integrates well with the objectives and goals of other stakeholders in the sector
- To share information and promote the campaign within their own organisations and environments.

## **2025 Palliative Care Week theme 'Living for Today, Planning for Tomorrow.'**

The theme 'Palliative Care: Living for Today, Planning for Tomorrow' was chosen following consultation at the planning workshops, with AIIHPC staff, member organisations, and the wider network through the Palliative Care Week Reference Group and AIIHPC Voices4Care volunteer group.

Throughout the consultation process several themes were proposed which were further refined down to two which were voted on:

- ‘Palliative Care: Living for Today, Planning for Tomorrow’ (45 votes)
- ‘Palliative Care: It’s more than you think’ (38 votes)

Every year, we choose a broad theme that lends itself to sharing those core messages about the benefits of palliative care. In 2025, we wanted to encourage people to have conversations about their future care wishes, and the chosen theme strongly supported this objective.

In 2024, we secured support from the HSE and Department of Health, Northern Ireland for our Palliative Care Week information booklets. The content was developed following consultation with the Palliative Care Reference Group, the HSE National Office for Palliative Care and the Department of Health NI. Following a suggestion from one of the workshops, we re-used the agreed text from 2024 again, updating its design for 2025.

The booklet includes simple, relatable messaging about palliative care, quotes from those with lived experience and links to further information.



4 - Palliative Care Week Booklet 2025



2025 marked the 9th year of the Personal Experience Video Project. This year, we were able to show the breadth of supports that people experience through palliative care services and we were lucky to meet people from right across the island of Ireland, from Belfast to Galway to Dublin and Mullingar and learn about the strong links between LauraLynn, Ireland’s Children’s Hospice and Children’s Health Ireland; the importance of Spiritual Care; School Bereavement supports and more.

The videos are first broadcast during Palliative Care Week, and we continue to promote the videos beyond the week. The videos are hosted on The Palliative Hub and its public focused sites (including the Adult, Children and Young People and Carers) and we encourage their use as educational resources following the week by engaging with AIIHPC’s Education Network and Communities of Practice. We encourage everyone to continue sharing them, particularly when teaching students or helping healthcare staff become more familiar with what palliative care is and the positive impact it can have on those receiving it, as well as on their families and loved ones. AIIHPC gratefully acknowledges all participants and their families — their involvement has had an immeasurable positive impact on the campaign, helping to share powerful and uplifting messages about the benefits of palliative care.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Garry Kelly and his team at GK Media for their professionalism. We also wish to acknowledge the wonderful efforts of our colleagues across member organisations and the wider palliative care sector who provide so much support each year in developing the videos. In particular, we wish to acknowledge colleagues from the organisations involved in the project this year- St. Francis Hospice, LauraLynn, Marie Curie, Galway Hospice Foundation, Belfast Trust, Midlands Regional Hospital, MacMillan Unit,

Northern Trust. A special word of thanks and appreciation goes to those who shared their own personal stories with us, all shared for the good of others.

View the **2025 Personal Experience Video Project** [here](#).



5 - Darcy Lyons and Megan McBride, Regent House School, Newtownards, Northern Ireland.

### **Photo Competition**

In order to engage with people through the medium of art and creativity, for 2025, AIIHPC held a photo competition to help capture what the theme ‘Living for Today, Planning for Tomorrow’ meant to people. People were invited to submit a photo that captures what this year’s theme means to them. The photos are hosted on the campaign’s website [thepalliativehub.com](http://thepalliativehub.com), and a certificate and prize was awarded to the winning photo entry at the beginning of Palliative Care Week 2025.

Our very worthy winners of the photo competition were the McMillan Family from Northern Ireland and Sunhill Nursing Home from the Republic of Ireland. We are very grateful to all entrants for sharing their perspectives of palliative care through their lovely photos.



***Living The Best Life***



## Political Endorsement



An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin joined AIIHPC at the photo opportunity to launch the campaign (ROI), alongside Declan Moore, who receives palliative care supports from St Francis Hospice. The Taoiseach spoke about the importance of awareness, access, and inclusion.

“Access to vital services at critical times is a fundamental right. We must bridge the knowledge gap, ensuring every individual is aware of and can readily access the support and care they need, when they need it most. This is about empowering our communities and ensuring no one is left behind,” Taoiseach Micheál Martin.

Minister for Health, Jennifer Carroll MacNeill T.D., praised AIIHPC’s leadership in coordinating the 12th consecutive campaign and recognised the difference that palliative care makes to families every day. She reaffirmed the Government’s commitment to implementing the National Adult Palliative Care Policy and to expanding access through new hospice developments in

Cavan, Drogheda, and the Midlands. See video message from the Minister Carroll MacNeill [here](#).

In Northern Ireland, Minister for Health, Mike Nesbitt MLA, participated in a photo opportunity to launch the campaign in Northern Ireland. He also shared a message that combined both evidence and empathy. He spoke about how palliative care helps people with life-limiting conditions to live well in the present and called for greater understanding of the breadth of supports available. See video message from the Minister [here](#).

*"We want to encourage people to have conversations about what matters to them, with their loved ones as well as with health and social care professionals,"* Minister Nesbitt.

Minister Nesbitt also addressed the Hospice UK event at Stormont, launching *Bringing Care Closer to Home*, and acknowledged AIIHPC's leadership in raising awareness through an all-island approach. See video message from the Minister [here](#)



6 - Palliative Care Week 2025 launch (NI), L-R are Karen Charnley, CEO, AIIHPC; Mike Nesbitt, Minister for Health NI; Sally Convery, Nurse Consultant for Palliative & End-of-Life Care, Public Health Agency.



## A Message of Compassion

A heartfelt message was also received from the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, who expressed gratitude to everyone working and volunteering in palliative care. We are eternally grateful to President Higgins for his unwavering support of this campaign throughout his terms as President of Ireland. See the full message [here](#).

The visible endorsement from political leaders has a tangible impact, amplifying the campaign's value and in turn, connecting with people beyond the palliative care sector but into local communities across the island of Ireland.

These contributions from public figures add immense value in helping to shift perceptions and strengthen the understanding that palliative care is not only about the end of life but about living well, with dignity, at every stage of life.

## ***Buildings and Landmarks light up for Palliative Care Week***

It is always special to see the magenta pink associated with Palliative Care Week illuminating buildings, acknowledging the campaign and especially those whose lives have been touched by palliative care, health professionals and volunteers. We thank Dublin City Council, Galway City Council, Belfast City Council, Donegal County Council and Tipperary University Hospital



*7 - Tipperary University Hospital*



*8 - Cork City Hall*



*9 - Dublin City Hall*



10 - Polestar Roundabout, Letterkenny

## Events

We recorded **114** events taking place across the island of Ireland. This represents a **100%** increase on 2024 - an unprecedented number of events. AllHPC's member organisations, hospices, hospitals and other organisations hosted events, both online and in-person, aimed at the public but also for health and social care professionals. For 2025, we presented the events listing as a map, showing the spread and volume of events across the island.

The many events and activities took place in a variety of settings and included training sessions and workshops, promotional and information stands, and conferences catering for health care professionals and for the public.

### **Special screenings of the play 'Cicely and David'**

Palliative Care Week was officially opened at two separate events on the 7th and 8th September with Professor David Clark's play '*Cicely and David*.' Having seen David's play at the Hospice UK Conference in 2024, we had started to put the wheels in motion to show the play here, in Belfast and Dublin. It was the perfect start to the campaign, and we were delighted to have David join us for both screenings, along with 120 guests. Both events were followed by excellent panel discussion, ably chaired by veteran broadcaster Paul Clark at The Mac, Belfast on Sunday and TV presenter Muireann O' Connell at The Lighthouse Cinema on Monday. Read a blog post from writer, David Clark reflecting on the events- [Cicely and David: screenings in Belfast and Dublin during Palliative Care Week 2025 – Quotidian](#).



11 - Paula Pinto, Programme Manager, AIIHPC; Christine Campbell, member of AIIHPC's Voices4Care volunteer group and panellist; Paul Clark, MC and David Clark, Writer.



12 - Fintan Fagan, Chair, AIIHPC; Karen Charnley, CEO, AIIHPC; Muireann O'Connell, MC; Dr Regina McQuillan, Palliative Medicine Consultant and panellist; Prof David Clark, Writer; Celia Kenny, member of AIIHPC's Voices4Care Volunteer Group and panellist.



13 - A Snapshot of Events

### *AIHPC Events*

As well as the campaign launch events in Belfast and Dublin, AIHPC hosted a number of events during the week.

A webinar was held for staff at [Alone](#), the organisation that enables people to age at home across the Republic of Ireland. The feedback aimed to provide an introduction to palliative care and advanced care planning for staff, to help them to identify when those needs arise for people they are supporting within communities. The webinar had over 80 attendees and was very well received.





On the Tuesday, a webinar took place on **‘Spiritual Care: What it is and Why it matters?’**. The webinar was chaired by Daniel Caldwell, Chaplain and Lecturer at Atlantic Technological University. The panel included Fiona Galligan, Chaplain at Evora Hospice Care. Insights were shared on spiritual care beyond religion, including its relevance in hospice and community care and its role in helping people live well until they die. John Wonnacott, Specialist Palliative Care Chaplain, Northern Health & Social Care Trust interviewed Fred who provided a patient/ service user perspective. The webinar was organised by AIIHPC’s Community of Practice for Pastoral Care and Chaplaincy.

Ember: Thinking Ahead and Planning for Care Guide Webinar took place on 12 September. At this webinar for health and social care professionals, attendees learned about how the [Ember Guide](#) was created, its content and how it can be used to raise awareness amongst your colleagues, patients and loved ones.

Copies of the EMBER Guide are available to order by contacting Yvonne McCahill, [ymccahill@aiihpc.org](mailto:ymccahill@aiihpc.org).

### *Podcasts*

#### **A number of new podcasts were launched during Palliative Care Week**

**North West Hospice - Journey Together** Hosted by life coach Tara Rafter, each episode blends personal stories, professional insights, and practical advice to help listeners navigate life’s most challenging moments with clarity and compassion. Tara also features in a special episode, reflecting on self-care and the emotional journey of facing serious illness. Listen [here](#).

#### **Marymount Palliative Care Week podcast**

This podcast from Marymount University Hospital and Hospice was launched recently during Palliative Care Week and it explains the role of syringe drivers, presented by Marymount Hospice Pharmacist, Maedhbh Flannery. Listen [here](#).

## St Francis Hospice - Hospice Garden Podcast

Each episode shares stories and reflections from the St Francis Hospice community — voices of care, connection, and compassion. Listen [here](#).

## Reach and Impact

### Promotional materials

This year saw huge demand for promotional materials with almost 12, 000 printed items distributed to palliative care services and professionals. The growth in the number of events and new collaborations influencing this increased demand.

These resources were also available to download online as well as a range of digital assets for use on social media for sharing campaign messaging, promoting events, etc. See **Appendix A** below for examples of graphics.

Printed Promotional Materials	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Leaflet	8,495	9,600	10,000	8094	10,000
Poster	443	950	950	600	950
Social Media frames	570	750	750	NA	800

14 - **Table 1** – Distribution of printed promotional materials

### Coffee Morning 2025

For the ninth year, Palliative Care Week took place in close proximity to the annual Bewley’s Big Coffee Morning for Hospice in the Republic of Ireland. The two campaigns continue to complement one another as Palliative Care Week strengthens awareness of palliative care and Coffee Morning carries forward the conversation, reinforcing the importance of sharing information about palliative care.

We thank the Together for Hospice team for their continued support in distributing 3,000 Palliative Care Week leaflets through promotional packs, helping to extend the campaign’s reach and impact.

## Media Reach and Impact



AIHPC commissioned The Communications Clinic for media communications support for Palliative Care Week 2025.

Palliative Care Week 2025 was announced on 28 July via a press release tailored to each county encouraging people in communities across the island of Ireland to engage with Palliative Care Week and to find out more about palliative care. The campaign theme and photo competition (**new for 2025**) were also announced. Read the press release [here](#).

Research on 'Death Literacy' from Queen's University Belfast was published within our main campaign press releases, published on Sunday, 7 September. The press releases were accompanied by the launch photos with Taoiseach, Micheál Martin (ROI) and Mike Nesbitt, Minister for Health (NI). Read the full press releases here- [ROI Press Release](#) and [NI Press Release](#).

In total, the campaign generated **170** individual media items across print, broadcast and online media this year, representing a **25%** increase on 2024. (See **Appendix B** for full media list).

We worked with The Communications Clinic to develop a comprehensive media plan to include a list of media spokespeople, both professionals working in palliative care and people with personal experience of palliative care.

Thank you to all media spokespeople across the island and to those who worked to secure media opportunities for local initiatives, and The Communications Clinic for their commitment to achieving a very strong media presence throughout.

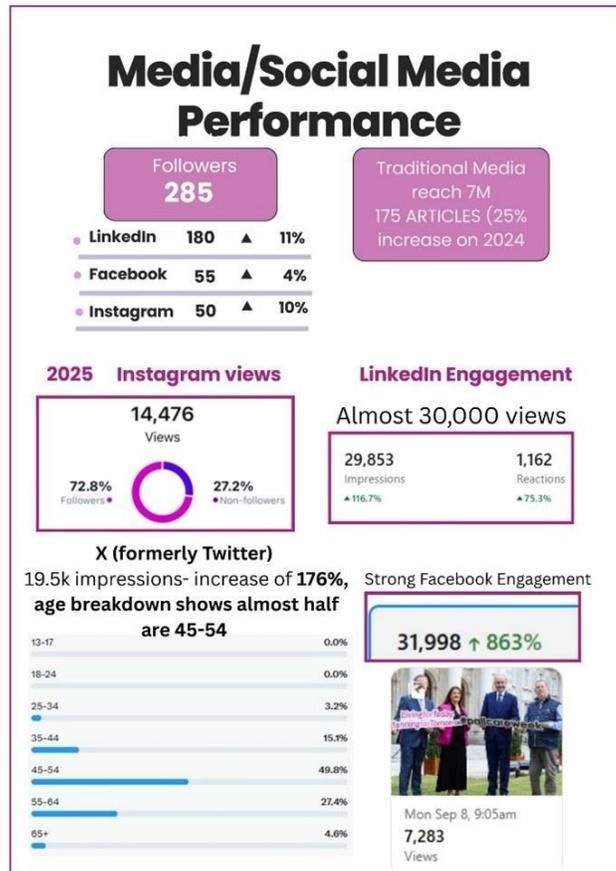
Coverage was secured across national local print and broadcast media including the Irish Independent, RTE Radio 1, Galway Bay FM, Irish News, Belfast Telegraph, Midwest Radio, BBC Radio Ulster, the Irish Farmer's Journal and many more We are very grateful to all media outlets who supported our campaign each year.

The media interest and coverage that we have seen in recent years was maintained for 2025. We created a longer lead in time to the campaign this year and media coverage, particularly local radio coverage ran over a longer period. We are thankful to all our member organisations for their support in providing spokespeople, especially people who shared their lived experience of palliative care, what they contribute by sharing to help others is immeasurable.

### Social Media Impact and Performance 2025

Our social media channels provide an essential platform for sharing of messaging and promotion of events throughout the campaign including pre campaign promotion. It is also highly valuable for engaging with the activities of our member organisations, key stakeholders, charity organisations and individuals.

In 2025, our social media channels demonstrated strong and sustained engagement, with Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram performing exceptionally well. The campaign drove meaningful growth, adding almost 300 new followers across platforms. LinkedIn and Facebook achieved particularly high viewer numbers, reinforcing the effectiveness of our content strategy. Notably, our top-performing Facebook post reflected significant political support from the Department of An Taoiseach, highlighting the impact and reach of our messaging.



We are also grateful to the HSE National Communications social media team for their support in sharing messaging and other information on social media channels throughout the week and HSE Internal Communications for sharing a number of the events to the HSE internal events listing.

**Table 2 – Palliative Hub activity during Palliative Care Week 2021-2025**

We are very encouraged to see growth in traffic with The Palliative Hub page users and viewers significantly higher. We aim to boost the engagement through the site updates currently underway and further promotion planned in 2025.

Year	Sessions	Users	Page views	Pages per Session	Avg. Session Duration
2025	1,756	1,301	3,106	1.77	3.59
2024	1,459	1,107	2,547	1.75	4.03
2023	1,967	1,143	3,663	1.86	3.37
2022	1,237	936	2,424	1.96	02.15
2021	3,529	2,947	7,133	2.02	01.49

15 - Table 2 – Palliative Hub activity during Palliative Care Week 2021-2025

Year	Direct (using direct URL to Hub)	Social (redirected from social media)	Referral (link from another website/ newsletter)	Organic Search
2025	460	500	160	309
2024	542	199	142	333
2023	480	268	151	407
2022	450	89	88	274
2021	1,392	711	528	390

16 - Table 3– Source of traffic to the Palliative Hub website ([www.palliativehub.com](http://www.palliativehub.com)) 2021-2025

**Table 3– Source of traffic to the Palliative Hub website ([www.palliativehub.com](http://www.palliativehub.com)) 2021-2025**

This table shows the various ways that people accessed The Palliative Hub, e.g. the strong engagement on social media this year is reflected here as we see that most people accessed via a social media link, and a 75% increase on last year.

**Costs**

Palliative Care Week 2025 project costs were €40,360. This figure does not include AIIHPC’s staff resources, which amount to considerable additional cost. The core AIIHPC staff who execute the campaign include the Communications Project Manager; Programme Manager – Policy & Engagement; CEO; Office Manager and Executive Assistant.

AIIHPC would like to acknowledge the funding received from the HSE (ROI) and the Public Health Agency (NI) along with the ongoing support of its member organisations that makes Palliative Care Week possible.

## Lessons learned and looking ahead

We hope that we have succeeded in showing the impact of our combined efforts to produce another highly impactful Palliative Care Week for 2025. Collaboration will continue to underpin this success as we move forward to think of the thirteenth campaign in 2026. We now know more than ever that we are greater than the sum of our parts, and will work together towards our common goal of increasing understanding of palliative care and its benefits for the good of all who may need it, now and in the future.

Educating young people about palliative care has featured prominently in our feedback throughout the consultation process, particularly in recent years. It is great to see the new initiatives coming through in this area and we need to continue to find ways to engage with young people.

We need to ensure inclusivity, accessibility, and prioritise building new connections with voluntary and civic organisations outside of palliative care, to embed greater knowledge and information into towns and communities.

We need to continue to maximise AIIHPC's member organisation's and the wider palliative and health care sector's engagement in the planning and implementing of the Palliative Care Week campaign to ensure continued growth in the reach of the campaign.

Palliative Care Week carries significant cost each year and we continue to explore funding opportunities so that the campaign can continue to grow and innovate on a year-on-year basis.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge and thank AIIHPC's 27 member organisations for their essential support and engagement with Palliative Care Week and the work of the Institute. In addition, AIIHPC's funders which include the HSE, Public Health Agency, Health Research Board and Health and Social Care R&D Division, Public Health Agency who are also integral to the ongoing operation of the Institute and we are very appreciative of their ongoing support. The campaign also attracted support from hospitals and charity organisations outside the palliative care sector which demonstrates a commitment to sharing information about palliative care for the benefit of the community.



**17 - Appendix A- Promotional Materials**

Full range of brand assets can be viewed [here](#).

**Appendix B- Media coverage list**

[View 2025 media list](#)

**Thank You**