

FOYLE HOSPICE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's [governing document], the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019).

Objectives and activities

The principal activities of the Foyle Hospice are the provision of palliative and end of life care for those patients who require it, as well as providing support for their families and carers. These services, free of any cost, are delivered through Foyle Hospice's Community Team, Day Hospice and In-Patient Care services and support.

The aims and objectives of the charity are as set out in the objects contained in the company's Memorandum of Association as well as the new three-year Strategic Plan, with effect from April 2024 – March 2027. In fulfilling its objectives, Foyle Hospice provides the following services:

In-Patient Care

The In-Patient Unit currently comprises 9 beds and 1 self-contained apartments. Foyle Hospice supports families, friends and carers of patients to help them cope during their illness and in bereavement, in an attentive and non-intrusive way. Patients may be admitted for respite care or for pain and symptom control with a view to being discharged home. Patients are also admitted for specialist care and support in the terminal phase of their illness.

Through the In-Patient Unit the Hospice also provides a 24-hour advisory service to GP's District Nurses and others on any matters in relation to a patient's care.

Community Palliative Care Nursing Team

Foyle Hospice has a team of specialist nurses who visit patients in their homes across the whole of the Western Health and Social Care Trust area. The Community Palliative Care Nursing Team work closely with GP's and District Nurses offering support and advice to ensure patients receive the best quality of care available. The specific needs of family and friends are also considered. A Specialty Doctor, supported by our medical team within Foyle Hospice and other professionals closely support these specialist nurses.

Day Therapy

Our Day Therapy Service operates three days per week and provides an opportunity for patient assessments, social activities and complementary therapies. It also enables a short respite break for those at home, who provide caring arrangements for an ill relative or friend.

Bereavement Support

This is an important element of hospice care and support available to relatives and friends of patients. The bereavement support sessions are facilitated by staff, supported by experienced volunteers and offer a safe, secure and comfortable environment for the users to express their feelings relating to their experience of death.

Healing Hearts is a specialist bereavement support service for young people aged 4 – 18 years and is led by a Children and Young Person's Facilitator, currently supported by our Children's Counsellors.

Advice

Foyle Hospice offers 24/7 Telephone Advice service, which is available at all times for advice to GPs, district nurses, hospital staff, health care professionals, relatives and other members of the public in matters relating to Palliative and End of Life Care.

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Other Activities

During the financial year, Foyle Hospice once again received addition non-recurrent funding from the Department of Health's Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG) to support continued delivery of the Integrative Care Clinic three days per week. This continues to be provided on an annual basis and we are hopeful, that following a recent comprehensive review by funders, this will become partly or wholly core funded within the context of our revised Day Hospice model.

SPPG has also provided funding to enable the delivery of a Compassionate Communities framework across Northern Ireland, which continues to focus on raising awareness and education about death, dying and bereavement within communities. This project is currently funded to the end of March 2025 and continues to build and develop strong relationships with agencies, organisations and groups across the entire region.

Through the Department of Health's Cancer Charities Support Fund, administered by the Community Foundation Northern Ireland, Foyle Hospice has continued to enhance its Community Team, which is now available seven days per week, to include weekends and public holidays. Phase One of this funding has also enabled provision of adult and children counselling services and allowed us to create a Carer Health and Well Being resource. These services were originally funded until the end of March 2024, but delivery has been extended to March 2025.

Further funding was approved for Foyle Hospice, through Phase Three of the Department of Health's Cancer Charities Support Fund. This includes a Specialty Doctor to support the Community Team and additional resource to help deliver our ongoing Carer Support Programme, as well as a Complementary Therapist services, all of which has also been extended until the end of March 2025.

Public benefit

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

Volunteers

Volunteers play a key role in all services at Foyle Hospice, particularly in the provision of vital support to the IPU, Day Hospice, Bereavement Support, Fundraising and Retail. Trustees volunteer their time freely to attend regular board meetings, structured and ad hoc sub committees, as well as offering ongoing support to the Senior Management Team and the organisation as a whole. A Volunteer Forum has also been established, offering a platform for volunteers across all key service areas to have a voice and provide an opportunity to feedback to improve and/or enhance respective service delivery.

Achievements and performance

Significant activities and achievements against objectives

The Board of Trustees are extremely pleased to have had yet another exceptionally positive inspection by RQIA in January 2024, with no areas of improvement or recommendations reported.

The new strategic plan focuses on enhanced services and support frameworks, so as to greater enable patients to remain at home. The review of Day Hospice services has been undertaken by SPPG and we hope that the outcome will result in closer working relationships with the Integrative Care Clinic and more nurse led clinics. We hope to provide an optimum number of bed spaces at our Inpatient Unit, which are so desperately needed to support patients with more complex conditions.

We are pleased that Foyle Hospice's accounts for 2023/24 demonstrate a surplus of £352,682. However, the Board of Trustees are well aware of the long-term financial risks and uncertainty as we continue to navigate a post-pandemic society, further compounded by the ongoing cost-of-living crisis and political instability.

Some of our operational costs may have remained steady, while others have increased. This requires us to continuously review and consider suppliers in order to effectively provide our services. We have robust mechanisms in place so that we can closely monitor and review these costs on a regular basis.

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The Trustees, along with the Senior Management Team, are committed to identifying opportunities whereby income streams can be increased and costs can be reduced to ensure that services are delivered in an appropriate and timely manner. We continue to liaise positively with the Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG) and relevant personnel within the Department of Health to secure support, so that we can adequately deliver services to patients and their families. We strive to work collaboratively with relevant Ministers, Elected Representatives, Health Committee, NI Executive All-Party Group on Terminal Illness, All Ireland Institute of Hospice and Palliative Care (AIHPC), Hospice UK and through the Hospice Alliance NI to better serve patients with hospice and palliative care needs.

We are still waiting on the outcome and recommendations from the Strategic Planning and Performance Group's review of the Day Hospice Model.

Financial review

The Statement of Financial Activities indicates that the Hospice had incoming resources of £4,321,700 in the year. The expenditure for the year was £4,549,176. Which resulted in net expenditure of £227,476. Net gains on investments, including revaluation increases on investments to market value and sterling euro exchange adjustments, resulted in the Hospice reporting total net movement in funds for the 2023/24 financial year of £352,484. As such, the Hospice's accumulated funds increased by this amount.

Trustees, along with the Finance and Audit Committee and Senior Management Team have continued to monitor our income and reserves, assessing the financial and operational risks to the charity, taking appropriate actions to mitigate the impact of any negative outcomes.

Reserves policy

The Trustees have established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets ('the free reserves') held by Foyle Hospice should equate to approximately 12 months of unrestricted expenditure to enable the charity to continue the current activities in the event of a significant drop in fundraising. The Trustees consider the annual cost of running the Hospice in the current environment to be £3,900,000.

At 31 March 2024 the free reserves were £7,132,364 and as such the target has been achieved.

Additionally, £164,717 was received in respect of the Integrative Care Clinic and Compassionate Communities. A further £183,025 was received through the Cancer Charities Support Fund.

Our voluntary income has performed much better than anticipated in year and has resulted in a significant increase in Foyle Hospice's free reserves at the reporting date. Trustees accept the projection of deficits of income against expenditure for 2024/25 financial year, but have increased targets for voluntary income based on previous year's performance. The organisation as a whole, will continue to monitor income and expenditure during 2024/25 on a quarterly basis.

The assessment is based on the non-recurring nature of some funding support received during 2023/24 and the unpredictability of voluntary income such as legacies and donations, further compounded by the impact of the cost-of-living crisis.

Therefore, the Trustees anticipate that the free reserves will be used to ensure we maintain appropriate levels of service provision during this period.

Investment policy

The Trustees have considered the most appropriate policy for investing funds. In the accounting year ended 31 March 2024 the Trustees continued with the management of their investment portfolio through Davy. Davy's aim is to ensure that selected securities are relatively safe and provide a reasonable yield. They do not currently chase high yield to the detriment of risk in the portfolio.

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Major risks

The Governance and Risk Committee works in collaboration with the Senior Management Team in relation to managing and mitigating against risk. A Risk Management Strategy is in place, alongside a Corporate Risk Register and Operational Risk Register, both of which are reviewed on a regular basis.

This Committee has assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the charity, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Structure, governance and management

The organisation is a company Limited by Guarantee not having a share capital, incorporated on 11th October 1985 and is registered with The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mrs Angela McIntyre MBE (Chairperson)

Ms Patricia Blaney (Vice Chairperson)

Mr Gerard O'Hara (Treasurer)

Mr Gerard Guckian

(Resigned 19 December 2023)

Mr Patrick Kelly

Professor Dolores O'Reilly

(Resigned 19 December 2023)

Mr Brendan Dowdall

Ms Jennifer Maloney

Mrs Carolann Doherty

Mrs Gillian King

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The Board of Trustees can have up to 24 members but not less than 5 members. There are currently 8 Trustees. As set out in the Articles of Association, one third of the serving trustees retire at each Annual General Meeting and they shall be those who have been longest in office since the last election or appointment. A retiring director shall be eligible for re-election for at least a second term of three years. The Trustees shall at any time elect a new trustee by co-option and who will remain in office until the next Annual General Meeting, but shall also be eligible for re-election.

Foyle Hospice undertakes an annual skills audit among Trustees in order to identify any knowledge and/or skills gaps within its membership. These skills are specific to the strategic and operational nature of the organisation. Foyle Hospice will undertake regular Trustee Recruitment Drives to achieve balance and with a view to proactive succession planning.

Trustee induction and training

From time to time, expressions of interest will facilitate recruitment of new trustees to meet the essential skill set for the Board of Trustees. Potential candidates will meet with the Chair and Vice Chairperson in the first instance for a discussion about their role, responsibilities and expectations. They will then have the opportunity to meet with the Chief Executive who will facilitate an orientation day to brief them on: their legal obligations under charity and company law, the charity commission guidance on public benefit, and inform them of the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, various committees, organisational structure and decision-making process, the strategic plan and recent financial performance of the charity.

As part of the induction, they will have an opportunity to meet with Senior Management Team, key employees and other trustees. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate and further support the undertaking of the role.

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Organisational structure

The Board of Trustees administer the charity. A Chief Executive Officer is appointed by the Trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity. To facilitate effective operations, the CEO has delegated authority, within terms of delegation approved by the Trustees, for operational matters including finance and the management of the In-Patient Unit, the Day Hospice, Community Team and the Income Generation and Communications Department, alongside any other projects that may be contracted to Foyle Hospice.

Relationship with related parties

None of the trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between a trustee or senior manager of the charity with a contracted supplier must be disclosed to the full Board of Trustees in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party. In the current year, no such related party transactions were reported. All Trustees are required to complete a Declaration of Interest Form and these are updated on an annual basis or as required subject to individual circumstances.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees, who are also the directors of Foyle Hospice for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company Law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Auditor

Following a tender process, Moore (NI) LLP have been re-appointed as auditor of Foyle Hospice for the three-year period covering 2024/25 - 2026/27. In accordance with the company's articles, a resolution proposing that Moore (NI) LLP be reappointed as auditor of the company will be put at the Annual General Meeting.

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

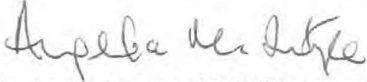
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Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.



Mrs Angela McIntyre MBE (Chairperson)
Trustee

30 September 2024