

# PRESS RELEASE

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Immediate release.

## THE IRISH HOSPICE FOUNDATION WELCOMES COMMITMENT TO HOSPICE/PALLIATIVE CARE IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

The Irish Hospice Foundation (IHF) has today (26<sup>th</sup> January) welcomed the commitment in the “National Development Plan 2007-2013 Transforming Ireland” to developing palliative care services around the country.

The Plan specifically refers to providing support to develop specialist palliative care beds in-patient units, palliative care community support beds, day services and ancillary supports. Support for hospice/palliative care is included under Primary, Community and Continuing Care (PCCC) which has an investment programme of €2.1 billion.

More than 6,000 Irish people use hospice care services each year but a report entitled “*A Baseline Study on the Provision of Hospice/Specialist Palliative Care Services in Ireland*” released last March revealed continued inconsistency and inequities in accessing hospice services throughout the country.

The capital costs associated with the hospice/palliative care commitments in the National Development Plan would require €150 million.

Eugene Murray, Chief Executive Officer of the IHF, stated: “While it is disappointing that specific projects by region are not mentioned, the commitment in the National Development Plan is consistent with earlier Government commitments to prioritise the development of hospice services under the recently agreed Social Partnership Agreement and the National Cancer Strategy.”

He continued: “We need to see a significant investment in hospice care in Ireland to ensure equal access to quality end-of-life services for all citizens. There are populations within the state for whom an extraordinary and concentrated planning and development programme will be needed before they can benefit from a level of service already available to many of their fellow citizens in other regions. The Irish Hospice Foundation hopes that these positive policy aspirations are matched by appropriate resource allocation.”

The IHF is a not-for-profit organisation which was set up in 1986 to support hospice services and promote the hospice philosophy.

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