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# Surviving Breast Cancer

27 September 2008



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Europa Donna Ireland (EDI) The Irish Breast Cancer Campaign, founded in 1998, is a volunteer-based patient advocacy group most of whose membership has had personal experience of breast cancer. EDI is one of 41 member countries of EUROPA DONNA – The European Breast Cancer Coalition, which is recognised as the breast cancer advocacy organisation for Europe.

Europa Donna Ireland's Mission is to bring the voice of the woman with experience of breast cancer to raising awareness of and campaigning for evidence based best practice in the diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer in Ireland.

The summer of 2007 in Ireland, was characterised by a shocking and disturbing series of revelations of misdiagnosis and poor practices in breast cancer diagnosis that upset and unnerved women across the country, sparking a number of independent investigations.

EDI campaigned strongly for the need to concentrate resources and staffing in specialist breast centres which could be independently accredited by HIQA against the National Quality Assurance Standards for Symptomatic Breast Disease Services launched in May 2007. Our target now is to keep up the pressure for the planned and phased transition of specific breast cancer services from hospitals around the country into the 8 designated cancer centres, and we very much welcome the appointment of Professor Tom Keane, who has been seconded here from the British Columbia Cancer Agency, in Canada, to achieve this.

One year on from these shocking revelations, our Conference will review progress and plans in relation to specialist breast centres in Ireland with some of the key players.

Although breast cancer is by far the leading cause of cancer death among women in Ireland, and mortality rates continue to lag behind the European average and the United States, with earlier detection and optimal treatment more and more women are successfully surviving a breast cancer diagnosis. The National Cancer Registry estimates that over 25,000 women are living in Ireland following a diagnosis of breast cancer, and as a result survivorship issues are becoming more important for patient advocates. The Conference will present an opportunity to raise and discuss issues around follow-up and to hear about the role of patient advocates in Canada and Europe. Participants will get the opportunity to ask questions and debate issues.

The Conference will be of interest and useful to all with an interest in breast cancer in Ireland, in particular, women and family members, support centre staff, volunteers, health care and promotion professionals, policy makers and administrators.

## PROGRAMME

9.30 Registration

10.00 Welcome, Christine Murphy Whyte, Chairperson, Europa Donna Ireland  
Opening of Conference by Mary Harney, T.D. Minister for Health and Children

### Progress and Plans for Specialist Breast Centres

**Chairperson:** Dr. Janice Walshe, Consultant Medical Oncologist, Adelaide, Meath and National Children's Hospital.

10.15 Professor Tom Keane, Interim Director, National Cancer Control Programme  
*Specialist Breast Centres: Challenges and Changes for Ireland*

10.45 Dr Tracey Cooper, Chief Executive, Health Information and Quality Authority,  
*Maintaining Momentum, Assuring Improvements*

11.05 Coffee

### What Women Need to Know About Follow up After Treatment

**Chairperson:** Veronica O' Leary, Director, Bray Cancer Support Centre.

11.20 Professor Niall O'Higgins, Professor Emeritus, University College Dublin,  
Professor and Head of Department of Surgery, Royal College of Surgeons  
in Ireland-Medical University of Bahrain  
*Aiming for Excellence: Issues and Options*

11.45 Mary Murray, Advanced Nurse Practitioner (Breast Care) St. Vincent's Hospital, Dublin.  
*A Holistic Approach*

12.05 Questions and Answers / Discussion

12.30 Lunch

### Advocacy in Action

**Chairperson:** Frances Fitzgerald, T.D. Fine Gael Senate Leader and Spokesperson on Health.

13.30 Judy Caldwell, Founder, Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation,  
British Columbia / Yukon Region  
*The Power of Patient Advocacy - Our Experience in British Columbia then and now.*

Christine Murphy Whyte, Board Member EUROPA DONNA  
*Joining Voices, Meeting Needs in Ireland and Europe*

14.20 Tina McGrath, Occupational Therapist and Patient Advocate  
*Speaking Out: Voices of Experience*

Questions and Answers / Discussion

15.00 Close of Conference

## SURVIVING BREAST CANCER

Saturday 27 September 2008

10 am – 3 pm Alexander Hotel, Dublin 2.

### Free Registration

#### Conference Booking Form

PLEASE PRINT

Name .....

Contact Address .....

Tel: ..... Email: .....

Special Requirements:

Dietary (Please specify).....

Sign language interpretation, alternative information formats,  
other (Please specify).....

Please email or post by 17 September 2008

to  
ediconference08@gmail.com

or  
PO Box 6602, Dublin 8.

or  
Register online at [www.europadonnaireland.ie](http://www.europadonnaireland.ie)

For further information:

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Signed.....

If you would like to be an active member of Europa Donna Ireland,  
please visit our web site at

[www.europadonnaireland.ie](http://www.europadonnaireland.ie)