



THE MISCARRIAGE ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND



Welcome everybody to our Summer/Autumn 2020 Newsletter

The newsletter is a space where we can share our stories of loss and find comfort in the knowledge that we are not alone in our grief.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this issue, it is really great that you want to share your stories.

Deirdre Pierce-McDonnell
Chairperson – The Miscarriage Association of Ireland



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Registered Charity No. CHY9738 / 20024420

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Committee Members:

June O'Toole, Mary Lawson, Angela Grace, Niamh Darcy, Lynn Cassidy, Maureen V Ward, Laura O'Sullivan, Carol Conroy, Jennifer Duggan, Kirsty Esplin, Susan Fysh, Sarah Doyle

Welcome

Welcome to the Miscarriage Association of Ireland Summer/ Autumn Newsletter 2020. Another year has passed since our last newsletter and now we all find ourselves in unprecedented times where we have to social distance ourselves from extended family members and friends. This can make the trauma and heartbreak of miscarriage an even more difficult, isolating experience. We have to invent new ways of communicating and connecting so that we can feel less alone and give each other comfort in our time of grief. In these times use of social media can help, and lead us to find stories, poems, articles that help us understand how we are feeling, and give us ideas on how to move forward with our grief.

On Instagram some suggestions to follow:

[miscarriageassociationireland](#), [miscarriageassociation](#) (#miscarriage), [tommys](#) (#togetherforchange)

On twitter some suggestions to follow:

[@MiscarriageThe](#), [@MiscarriageA](#), [@Tommys_baby](#)

It is important to follow the advice of GP's , and bereavement midwives and bereavement social workers and ask what support is available in your local area.

See **www.pregnancyandinfantloss.ie** for details of nationwide support organisations.

In our own hearts and homes we can mark the lives of our babies in whatever little ways are of significance to us individually. For some this is lighting a candle on those special dates, wearing that special piece of jewellery, or attending to or replanting a garden or planter pots, or writing a blog or sharing your story..... By writing down our story, it allows us to clarify our thoughts of our experience of baby loss and can it can be therapeutic. It is not necessary to share your story but if you do you can be sure all the feelings and emotions that you experienced will resonate with others and will make them and you feel less alone with their grief. The Miscarriage Association of Ireland provides support to women and their families who have been through the trauma of losing a baby in the following ways:

Via our website **www.miscarriage.ie** Check the website for details and updates on the following supports: Telephone helpline, Support group meetings (Physical and Virtual Meetings) Email – **info@miscarriage.ie**

Service of remembrance which takes place on the 2nd Sunday of November annually. Information book and leaflet - This is available to download on our website, or order for free online on **www.healthbrochures.ie** tel: **061-338580** or email: **enquiries@informireland.ie** Book of remembrance – where you can make an entry in memory of your baby. Send an email to **info@miscarriage.ie** with Baby's Name, Dates to remember, Remembered by, Special Thoughts.

Deirdre Pierce-McDonnell

Chairperson – The Miscarriage Association of Ireland

ONLINE SHOP

The Miscarriage Association of Ireland recently launched our on-line shop and our beautiful new “keepsake” teddy bear is now available to purchase, as well as our miscarriage candle, our logo pin, and our thumbprint tree cards. When you have lost a baby through miscarriage, it can be difficult to create memories.

With this in mind, we hope our new teddy bear will be a nice keepsake for you to remember your baby.

Visit **www.miscarriage.ie** to access the shop. All proceeds go towards helping the Miscarriage Association of Ireland run its services.

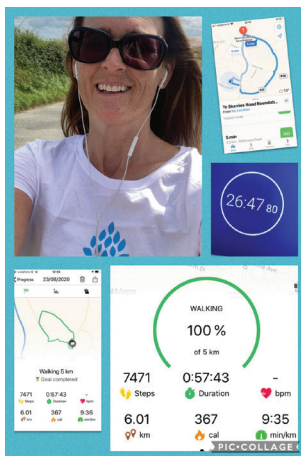


“Know you are not alone”

The Miscarriage Association of Ireland is there to help and support.

Deirdre Pierce-McDonnell
Chairperson – The Miscarriage Association of Ireland

OUR FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN - #5K4MISCARRIAGE



Please support our Fundraising Campaign by completing 5km run, walk and cycle and asking your family and friends to sponsor by texting REACHOUT to 50300.

Do the 5km run, walk, cycle on your own, or with your family or a group of friends (adhering to the current HSA guidelines on Covid restrictions). It is a lovely way to remember your baby (babies) whilst raising funds to help The Miscarriage Association of Ireland to continue to provide support to women and their partners and families who have lost a baby (babies) through miscarriage.

Please note, this campaign is ongoing, there is no specific date pick your own date and then donate!

Thanks to Lynn & Jason Cassidy who completed the 5km on our behalf and raised €200 for us. Thanks to Dawn O'Connor and her gorgeous family who completed a 5km cycle in memory of baby Aoife.



OUR 16th MEMORIAL STONE PLACED IN DONAGHCUMPER CEMETERY CELBRIDGE CO KILDARE

In September 2019 our 16th Memorial Stone was placed in Donaghcumper Cemetery in Celbridge Co Kildare. It is situated in the beautiful angels plot, an area behind an old stone wall to the left of the altar stand. It is a peaceful place which allows for reflection and will be of comfort to all those who do not have somewhere to go to remember their baby.

Dierdre Pierce-McDonnell



LIVING WITH GRIEF EVENT

On Thursday 6th February 2020, The North Dublin Bereavement Network, in conjunction with The Irish Hospice Foundation, hosted it's first ever "Living with Grief" event in the Clasac, Alfie Byrne Road, Clontarf, Dublin 3. The guest speaker was Niamh Fitzpatrick, Psychologist and sister of Captain Dara Fitzpatrick RIP. This free event was organised to raise awareness about grief and the range of supports available. It covered all aspects of grief, people bereaved through any circumstance - illness, sudden death, loss of a partner, parent, sibling, friend or child. The Miscarriage Association of Ireland was invited to take a stand and offer bereavement support as part of the Bereavement Network.

Deirdre and I were honoured to attend. As always, it is humbling to hear the story of somebody else's loss. We were close to tears as Niamh shared her heartbreaking story. She spoke movingly about her struggles in trying to cope and come to terms with the sudden death and loss of her beloved sister Dara, who died during an Irish Coast Guard Rescue Operation in 2017.

Living with Grief is not easy. I'm sure we are all aware of the roller coaster of emotions that accompanies loss and grief. Everybody's journey is different. Many of us can get lost along the way. There are no signposts! It can be helpful at these times to realise that support is available. Nobody should have to face this difficult time alone. It is so important to reach out to somebody. It is not a weakness to ask for help and it can be the difference between coping or not coping!

The number of people who stopped at The Miscarriage Association's stand continues to show just how much support is needed. Deirdre and I listened as people shared their experience of loss. We offered Information packs and explained about telephone support, support group meetings, our Book of Remembrance, Service of Remembrance and anything else we felt might be helpful. We were surprised to meet so many familiar faces. When you lose a child, I guess it is inevitable that you will cross paths with others who have experienced a similar loss. So often, we feel helpless when we don't have the answers that people desperately seek. We may not have answers but we are available to listen. We want you to remember that you are not alone and we do care.

It is a privilege for the Miscarriage Association of Ireland to be invited to be part of such a compassionate and caring group of people "The North Dublin Bereavement Network."

June O'Toole



UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL LIMERICK INFORMATION EVENING

The University Hospital Limerick ran an information evening on the 9th September 2019 in The Greenhills Hotel in Limerick. The evening focused on early pregnancy loss, miscarriage and ectopic pregnancy. There was information given on the types of miscarriage people experience and what the physical and emotional impact can be. The evening was well attended with time for questions and answers at the end of the evening. The hope is that such information evenings will become a regular ongoing event with another information evening on the 9th March 2020.

Jennifer Duggan

BEREAVEMENT STUDY DAY, THE ROTUNDA HOSPITAL, 12th FEBRUARY 2020

The Miscarriage Association of Ireland were invited to take part in the Bereavement Study Day in the Rotunda Hospital on the 12th February. Deirdre & Lynn attended on behalf of the association. It was our third time to take part and it is always fantastic to have the opportunity to be involved.

These study days are organised by the hospital as part of their training programme for their student & qualified midwives and cover all aspects of bereavement in the maternity hospital setting. This particular study day was for student midwives and it was very encouraging to see so many of them in attendance.

Deirdre & Lynn both spoke about their personal experiences of miscarriage and while it is always difficult to talk about it is so important for the student midwives to understand the huge impact, both physical & emotional, that the loss of a baby or babies through miscarriage has on women & their partners. By sharing our stories with them hopefully they can be even more mindful & aware of this in their future work.

We also spoke about the work we do and the support services we offer as well as the resources we have to help people to remember their babies. It is fantastic to share this information with them so that we can continue to work together with the hospital to make sure that women & their partners feel supported during an extremely difficult time.

It is also great to have the opportunity to share some of the general feedback that we hear from people who get in touch with us so that hopefully, together, we can continue to improve our support services.

Some key pieces of information we share with them is to try to always to be mindful of people's pregnancy journey both before & after loss, to try to make sure that women & their partners are fully informed about their care & their options and to use compassionate language when caring for people – small acts of kindness at such a sad time will make a huge difference.

We received really good feedback from the students & the bereavement team who all felt it was really beneficial that they get to hear personally about the massive impact that losing a baby or babies through miscarriage has and the things that they could do to make it a little easier.

Our thanks to Clare, Ann, Trish, Emma and all of the bereavement team at the Rotunda Hospital for giving us this wonderful opportunity & we look forward to being involved for many years to come.

Lynn Cassidy

OUR ANNUAL SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE - SUNDAY 10th NOVEMBER 2019 AT 3pm

The Miscarriage Association of Ireland's Annual Service of Remembrance took place on Sunday 10th November 2019 in St Theresa's Church. Our service is an opportunity for all those who have lost babies to acknowledge and remember their babies in a very special way. It also gives extended families the opportunity to support their loved ones by attending as a family. Each year we see a broad spectrum of people attending from very young children to older people. We also see many attending who have lost babies a long time ago but did not get to grieve for their loss at the time.

The theme this year was "Open Arms". We were honoured to have Archbishop Diarmuid Martin co-celebrating this year with Canon Mark Gardner and Renee Dilworth. The parish of St. Theresa's has been a welcome home for our service for many years and the parish priest Father David Corrigan was in attendance to assist and support us as he does every year. Margaret Woulfe our sign language interpreter helped us to reach out to the deaf and hard of hearing and our narrator Jim Ryan guided us through the service on the day.

Music was provided by Barbara Galvin Sheridan and Dave O'Connor and it enhanced our service in a very special way as music touches everyone who attended. The staff of our maternity hospitals took time out of their busy schedules to participate in our service which reminds us of their continual commitment to support those who lose a baby. Most of our participants were people affected directly by miscarriage or people there to support a family member.

In time honoured tradition, we had our candle ceremony near the end of the service where people got to light candles for their lost babies and place them on the steps of the altar. When the lights were turned down, it was very moving to see so many tiny lights on the altar. It reminded us that there are so many babies lost through miscarriage every year and so many people affected by the loss of these tiny babies.

After the service we provided refreshments and had the opportunity to meet and talk to many of those who attended the service. It is good to see people staying around after the service and getting the chance to talk to the committee and to meet with other parents who have a shared experience of miscarriage. A big thank you to our sponsors Bewley's, Lindt and Dunnes Stores for making this possible.



Our dedicated committee and their family and friends were instrumental in making this service happen and a special thank you to our committee members based in Cork who travelled up for the day. We hold our Service of Remembrance on the second Sunday of November every year so if you didn't get to attend last year, maybe we will see you in November 2020.

Angela Grace

KEEPING THE CONVERSATION ABOUT MISCARRIAGE GOING

It is often said that the topic of Miscarriage is a taboo subject, but the volunteers of the committee of The Miscarriage Association of Ireland take the opportunity to speak with the media on radio/ tv/ newspapers about miscarriage when they can. Over the last couple of years our volunteers have taken part in the followings interviews:

Jennifer Duggan who runs the Cork Support Group Meetings and the posts on the Cork Miscarriage Support Page on Facebook and the private email support – corkpregnancyloss@gmail.com gave the following interviews:

- Interview on Cork 98FM & Red RM in October 2018
- Spoke on the Ray Darcy show in November 2018
- Spoke with Dr Ciara Kelly in May and July 2019

Angela Grace one of our committee member who keeps the database up to-date and the IT going did a radio interview with Keith Finnegan on Galway Bay FM on 2nd November 2018.

Deirdre Pierce- McDonnell – chairperson of the association, gave a TV interview on Ireland AM 26th June 2019 (along with Siobhan O'Neil White from mams.ie)



EVENTS AT WHICH COMMITTEE MEMBERS OF THE MISCARRIAGE ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND GAVE PRESENTATIONS

Rotunda Bereavement Study day for Midwives and Student Midwives – committee members Lynn Cassidy and Deirdre Pierce- McDonnell gave a presentation where they shared their own stories of loss, discussed the common issues/ problems that we hear women and their partners experience during and following a miscarriage and outlined the services provided by The Miscarriage Association of Ireland. They spoke at the event in 2018 and most recently in February 2020.

Jennifer Duggan spoke about her experience of baby loss at an Early Pregnancy Loss/Miscarriage, Ectopic Pregnancy Information Evening in the Greenhills Hotel in Limerick on 9th September 2019. The event was organised by the University Hospital Limerick.

EVENTS AT WHICH THE MISCARRIAGE ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND WAS REPRESENTED BY OUR VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Irish Hospice Foundation's - "Living with Loss" event held in November in Dublin 2018 and 2019 were attended by Carol Conway, June O' Toole and Deirdre Pierce- McDonnell.

The Irish Hospice Foundations first "Living with Loss" event held in Cork on 6th June 2019 was attended by Jennifer Duggan.

The Rotunda Service of Remembrance held in November in Dublin's Pro Cathedral each year was attended in 2018 by Laura O' Sullivan and Deirdre Pierce- McDonnell and in 2019 by Deirdre.

The Coombe's Womens and Infants Hospital Service of Remembrance took place on 28th April 2019 in Our Lady of Dolours Church Dublin 8 and was attended by Carol Conway.

Feilecain's Summer Service in St Mary of the Angels Church, Church Street, Dublin 7 on 20th July 2019 was attended by Deirdre Pierce McDonnell & June O'Toole.

The Dublin North Bereavement Network – Living with Loss with speaker Niamh Fitzpatrick took place in February 2020 and the Association was represented by June O' Toole and Deirdre Pierce- McDonnell.



Thank you to all our committee members and volunteers who work all year round to keep the support meetings and the helplines going and all the committee members who give their time to go to meetings, do administration and share ideas – in Dublin a huge thank you to Mary Lawson, Laura O'Sullivan, Carol Conway, June O' Toole, Angela Grace, Sarah Doyle, Niamh Ryan, Niamh Darcy, Maureen V Ward, David McDonnell, Deirdre Pierce- McDonnell, in Cork – Jennifer Duggan, Susan Fysh and in Galway – Kirsty Esplin.

YOUR STORIES

You Are Not Alone

In the middle of January 2019 both myself & my partner found out we were pregnant. We had started trying to conceive in December 2018. We were delighted to see the 2 blue lines because we had been trying for some time. Towards the end of February 2019 after a sad event, I started bleeding heavily & I had almost passed out, we were both freaking out. After a visit to the doctors a couple days later, they sent me to the hospital where they announced our miscarriage.. Recently we both attended a psychic which was able to tell us that we miscarried a beautiful baby boy.. So we both named him Jesse x

I suffered a miscarriage in March 2019 when I was 8 weeks along. My husband and I were trying for our first baby for 6 months in the lead up to it. It was almost 'too good to be true' when I had the positive pregnancy test yet we were so excited and immediately had plans for the future.

My 'missed miscarriage' was revealed during a scan even though I already had warning signs of something being wrong. The scan revealed baby had no heartbeat but my body wasn't fully recognising that the pregnancy had come to an end. I waited an agonising 5 days at home before they could give me a hospital bed for a D&C.

All I can say is allow yourself to grieve for the loss of your baby. I don't think the emotional pain of your loss will ever leave you but I am a firm believer that time is a healer in terms of learning to cope. We hope our rainbow baby will arrive someday and that yours will too.

You are not alone x



YOUR STORIES

My Story

My story starts when I got married. As I was in my mid thirties, my husband and I knew that if we wanted children we shouldn't wait too long. So a couple of months after settling into married life we tried to have a baby. It proved more difficult than we expected and after a year we began to despair that we would never have a family of our own. Then finally six months later I was pregnant. We were very relieved and despite saying the usual things like "you never know how things will go" we didn't believe anything could go wrong. "Miscarriages didn't happen to people like us! "

So, we started making plans. I was so organised, I had my consultant booked and even went to the talk for first time pregnant mothers long before the twelve weeks. At twelve weeks, we met with a gang of our friends and told them our news. There was great excitement as a couple of us had got married within a year or two of each other and we were the first to be having a baby. I was twelve weeks pregnant and it felt great. The nausea had passed and I didn't feel as tired which I took as normal as I was at the end of the first trimester.

Sadly, two days later it was all over. I went to the toilet in work and there were two tiny brown spots. They didn't even look like blood but I knew something was wrong. So, I went to the Casualty department in the maternity hospital and waited my turn with the other expectant mothers. My friend from work Rosemary came with me and stayed with me until Mike arrived which meant so much to me. As I waited my turn, I listened to the midwife asking each mother the same questions, how were they feeling, had the baby moved that day etc. etc. When it came to my turn, I explained about the spotting in front of all the other mothers. Then I was moved to a cubicle and had a scan. The doctor was kind but quite matter of fact. He asked me several times was I sure of my dates and then told me if my dates were correct that there was something wrong. Then I went up to the scan room to have an internal scan. My husband and I sat in the crowded waiting room surrounded by pregnant women with hefty bumps all waiting to see their babies on the scan. I felt a fraud sitting there with no bump and no hope for what we would find on the scan. I imagined that everyone else in the waiting room were happy and excited and would be seeing wonderful scans of their healthy baby but I understand now that was not necessarily the case. There were probably other couples getting bad news on the same day but it felt like it was just us.

Well the internal scan revealed that I had had a missed miscarriage and that my baby had died at 7 or 8 weeks. We were both stunned. We never even knew there was such a thing as a missed miscarriage. I assumed if the baby was distressed that I would know and that there would be pain and bleeding. We went home and didn't know what to do next. No one tells you what to do when you lose a baby through miscarriage. We just sat silently for several hours. Even when we did ring people, we couldn't really explain what had happened as we did not understand ourselves. The worst thing for me was that my baby had died at 7 weeks and I didn't know. I felt really bad about that. I felt as the baby's mother that I should have realised something was wrong and it took me a long time to come to terms with this.

We went back to the hospital a few days later and I had the ERPC procedure to remove the last remnants of our baby. I didn't really question this procedure, I just accepted that it was the right thing to do. I felt like my baby had left me long before that day.

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After that we had our six weeks check-up. I am not sure what I expected but it was really only about your physical well-being. Physically I was fine and there was no obvious reason why I had had a miscarriage. It was explained to us that miscarriage is common at this stage of pregnancy. We looked everywhere for answers but there was none to be found. Our baby had died and no-one could tell us why. We searched for every piece of information on miscarriage but there weren't any answers there. I spent the next few months going over and over things. I went through every day wondering when things had gone wrong and if there was anything I could have done to save our baby. Despite reassurance from family, friends and doctors I couldn't help feeling it was my fault. I worried that it was the few glasses of wine or the late nights I had at Christmas before I knew I was pregnant. It felt like it was something I had done although my husband always told me that there was nothing I could have done to make a difference. There was just no reason for our miscarriage.

After a couple of months, we decided to try again. Although we were both still broken hearted about the loss of our first baby, deep down we knew we still wanted a family. Ironically, I got pregnant the first month I tried this time round. It was very hard. I was constantly thinking about the baby and if it was ok. I spent my days examining my symptoms. Some days I thought I felt sicker and more tired and that this was a good sign. Other days I was convinced that I was feeling better which meant my baby had died. I wished I could have a scan every day. I was on an emotional rollercoaster that I could not get off.

By eight weeks I felt something was wrong although I couldn't put my finger on it. We had a scan booked for nine weeks. This time our hospital experience was worse. Again, we sat in a very busy waiting room full of heavily pregnant women. Every time the midwife spoke to me, she called me the "reassurance scan" in front of the whole room which made us feel very insignificant and complete time wasters. After the internal scan the midwife kept questioning if I really was pregnant. Of course, I was sure, I have taken two pregnancy tests and I had all the right symptoms. Then she left us alone in the scan room for what seemed like an hour before she returned with another midwife without a word of explanation why we were left so long. The second midwife was more gentle and confirmed that I had been pregnant but unfortunately the pregnancy sac was now empty so the baby must have died and been absorbed back into the womb. My husband was more shocked than I was. He thought I was just worrying too much when I said I thought it would be bad news. He couldn't believe it could happen to us again.

Life after that was very bleak. Other people's lives seemed to move on while ours stood still. We felt we were trapped in time with this terrible sadness that we could not bear. We couldn't see how we could ever feel better. Our sadness was just too great. For many months I cried all the way to work and all the way home. I am sure people on the train thought I was a mad woman but I couldn't stop. I tried hard to stop crying before I came home so that I would not upset my husband. I knew he didn't mind but I really wanted to feel better. I tried hard to lift my spirits but nothing helped. Work was very strange too. Only my friend and my team leader knew I had been pregnant. I came back to work feeling very fragile but found I could not find the words to tell people what had happened. How do you tell someone you have lost a baby when they didn't even know you were pregnant? My colleagues all assumed I had a flu or something and asked how I felt and I went along with that. I would have liked to talk about it but I didn't know how. In fact, it was years later when I was again pregnant and things were going well, that I was able to open up and tell my work friends that I had lost two babies.

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It was a very lonely time for my husband. I often felt that he was not as upset as me but I did not realise until much later how hard it was for him. He worked hard to be the strong one and avoided getting upset in my presence as he felt it would make me more upset. He worried so much for me and he was really left all alone with his own grief. Lots of people asked after me but few thought of what it was like for him. So, for anyone reading this, remember the men as they need to grieve too.

I started some counselling as I felt there was no way I could ever feel normal again. It helped me a great deal. My miscarriages had left me questioning everything in my life including my relationships. I had certain expectations of the support I would receive if I ever needed help and was disappointed in some that were close to me. Some people were always supportive and there to help us through our grief. However, there were many others that were uncomfortable with our grief and who seemed to grow impatient with us. It seemed there is some magical time when you are supposed to pick yourself up and move on. Unfortunately for us it was not that simple. We did not want to wallow in our grief. We genuinely wanted to move one and to feel better but it was easier said than done. Not only had we lost two babies but we felt we had lost all hope of having a family.

Then all the other pregnancies started. My next-door neighbour told me she was pregnant and due her baby around the time our first child should have been born. My sister then told me that she was due her baby around the time our second baby should have been born. Although my husband and I were delighted for them it was hard for us to share in their joy. We felt guilty that we could not share in their happy news but we could not stop thinking of our own babies that would never be born. Of course, then the inevitable happened, our friends who got married around the same time as us and after us started getting pregnant and having babies. It felt like the whole world was having babies except us and it felt very unfair. We wouldn't wish anyone else ill during their pregnancy but couldn't understand why we weren't like them.

It was around this time that I contacted the Miscarriage Association and spoke to Maggie O'Neill. I didn't really know what I was looking for when I made that first call but I felt understood and supported straight away. I attended some meetings and was amazed that there were other people feeling that same way as us. It was good to hear other people's stories and to know that we were not abnormal. I realised just how lonely miscarriages can be and was comforted by others in the same situation. We gathered great strength from the experiences of others, and it helped us to come to terms with our own feelings. I remember attending my first Service of Remembrance and being met by Mary Lawson who remembered our names and knew our story and June O'Toole who made us feel very welcome and included. It was such an important step for us to have that day to remember our lost babies and to connect with others who have experienced miscarriage.

Finally, after a long break we tried again but after a year I had not got pregnant. We had slowly come to terms with our losses and to the reality that we would not have any children. We started to try and live our lives again. We had been very happy before our miscarriages and we tried hard to get that happiness back. We resigned ourselves to not having children and tried to fill our lives with other things. We had come to a place where life was getting better for us and we were beginning to feel some happiness again although we had not forgotten our babies. We had finally reached a point where we knew everything would be ok even if we did not have a family of our own, we had each other which was very precious to us.

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We never really gave up hope of having a baby. We kept trying but not with the same determination or hope as before. We decided not to let it take over our lives. Then it finally happened, I was pregnant again. We entered into this pregnancy with a lot of worry and anxiety. The Miscarriage Association was a great source of support for us at this time. It was not an easy nine months but thankfully I did go on to have a healthy baby boy Andrew. We couldn't believe he was actually ours and it took some time to get used to the idea that he was here to stay. He was our little miracle.

Three years later I was pregnant again. This pregnancy started badly when I had to have surgery and many x-rays after a simple accident. Despite reassurances from doctors we worried constantly about this baby. For the first time I had very bad morning sickness and every conceivable symptom of pregnancy, but this did little to reassure us. The good news is that despite all the worrying I gave birth to a healthy baby girl Sinéad. I still find it hard to believe that we have been blessed with these lovely children.

I had my miscarriages many years ago but the memories are still there. I won't say you ever get over a miscarriage but over time you become accustomed to the loss and somehow the unbearable becomes bearable.....

P.S. Since that first phone call, I have been supported by many wonderful people involved in the Miscarriage Association and when the time was right, I joined the committee myself. Having benefited so much from the help and support I received, I got to a stage in my life where I felt I could give something back. I hope I have helped other people along the way and I know that the Association has helped me so much. I have grown and changed as a person through my involvement and have made friends for life who have not just supported me through miscarriage but over time through other sad times in my life.

Angela



POETRY CORNER

My Precious Child

Your open arms reach out to me
Connecting my love with eternity.
You are deeply entwined within my heart
Where you belong right from the start.

When the wind blows, when the rain falls
When the sun shines, I know you are here with me.
Wherever I am, you are too,
For you are part of me and I am part of you.

I miss you, I love you,
You have somehow touched my soul
You are the missing link
That has made me whole.

Keep flying high little one
With open arms through the wind, the rain
and the sun.
Keep sending your love beams
My open arms will catch them one by one.
A life inside me, a love so strong.
She died inside me, but the love lives on.
It broke my heart for her to go.
I love her, I need her like she'll never know.
I never held her, or heard her cry,
And I wasn't ready to say goodbye.
Your loving memory will live in my heart.

ANON

On the wings of an angel, you flew away
God wanted you for his garden,
where flowers don't decay.
He saw your beautiful soul,
he knew you were the one
He carried you home to Heaven,
to sit beside his son.

Now he knew how sad, we would be,
To say goodbye to you.
So he made you our guardian angel,
To guide us in the things we do.

We are sorry you had to wait so long
For us to say goodbye
But somewhere in God's bigger plan
There are reasons, we don't know why.

Sometimes, we dream of how things
might have been.
Of all the things we might have seen.
Of all the places we might have gone.
Of all the times we would sing a song.

Sometimes the pain is so hard to bear.
But we smile and look up to heaven.
And know you are there.
Our special little Angel.

Mam and Dad (Helen & Tony)

You were a point of light
A beginning
We dared to hope
Your arrival longed for
Waves of joy
God's plan was different
You returned to the light
To be with angels

We were plunged into darkness
Deepest despair
Sorrow, loss, mourning

Then a window opened
A little light shone in
Was that you?
Now that point of light
Will always be in our hearts
Never forgotten, forever loved

Michael O'Keeffe

THANK YOU for fundraising on behalf of the Miscarriage Association

The committee of the Miscarriage Association of Ireland would like to extend a huge thank you to Aoife McDonagh and her family and friends who raised €8,637.25 for us.

Committee members Carol Conway, & Deirdre Pierce McDonnell met with Aoife and her friend Catherine recently to receive the cheque and to have a chat. Aoife and Catherine have both been through the heartbreaking experience of hearing those words “I’m sorry, but there is no heartbeat”. Those words haunt your heart forever.

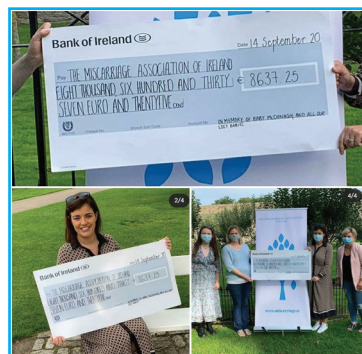
Aoife’s loss at 12 weeks was during Covid 19 pandemic in June and from chatting to Aoife you can really tell that the restrictions in place in hospitals, albeit necessary really made the experience so much harder to bear. “When I lost my baby, nobody gave me a tissue, it happened during Covid and it was the loneliest time of my life.

We are very good in Ireland, but, we can always do more. We owe it to all the women who have lost babies. There is room for change, there is room for improvement, there is room for education and there is room awareness surrounding pregnancy loss and miscarriage,”

Aoife set up a GO FUND ME page and was overwhelmed by the response. Her initial goal was €1,000. However, Aoife was overwhelmed by the response. Her family, friends and community really got behind Aoife and she raised an amazing €8,637 for us.

All monies raised will go towards helping The Miscarriage Association of Ireland to continue to provide support to women, their partners & families who have lost a baby (babies) through miscarriage.

*Thank you Aoife, family & friends
In Memory of Baby McDonagh*



MUIREANN O'KEEFFE'S PAGE

Created By : Muireann O'Keeffe
Page URL : www.idonate.ie/camping-withidiots
 Fundraising For The Jack & Jill Children's Foundation and The Miscarriage Association of Ireland

Latest Update !!
 I'm doing to fundraise for a great cause. Your support is very much appreciated.

The committee would like to extend a huge thank you to Muireann O'Keeffe who has raised €915 on behalf of the Jack and Jill Foundation and The Miscarriage Association of Ireland through her donate page and camping with idiots campaign. This is really appreciated - thank you Muireann & family.

SAD FAREWELL

We remember and acknowledge all those babies who have been lost to us, with whom for a time, however short, we had the privilege of sharing a very special relationship.



TELEPHONE SUPPORT, EMAIL SUPPORT, SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

Please remember we offer support to those who have experienced miscarriage and their families. You are welcome to contact us by **email: info@miscarriage.ie** where your email will be read and replied to with sympathy and understanding.

TELEPHONE SUPPORT is also available, for those who would like to chat to someone who has had the experience of miscarriage. Please check our website: www.miscarriage.ie/phonesupport.html to obtain the number of the person on call. If we are not able to take your call, please leave a message and we will contact you as soon as possible.

We also hold **SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS** in Buswell's Hotel, Molesworth Street, Dublin, 2 at 8.00 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month. Both women and their partners who have experienced miscarriage are very welcome to attend. You will be in a safe place to talk about the loss of your baby in the company of others who have had a similar experience.

We have our Book of Remembrance at the meetings in September, December, March and June for those who might like to make an entry in the Book.

Cork Support Group meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 8pm in the SMA Wilton Community Centre, Cork, T12AX94.

Galway Support Group meetings – please check website for date of next meeting.

Please note that Physical Support Meetings have currently been postponed due to social distancing measures in place to curb the spread of Covid-19. We are holding a monthly Virtual Support Meeting via Zoom on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 8.30pm. Please email info@miscarriage.ie with ZOOM in the subject bar and you will be forwarded the details to join the meeting.

OPINION PAGE

Articles are welcome for our Opinion Page. This page is used for people to state their opinions regarding miscarriage. This could mean:

- Treatment in hospital
- Aftercare
- Infertility problems
- Future pregnancies
- News that you wish to share with us about your miscarriage



Though people may wish to talk about their worries and concerns on this page, we would also welcome any positive experiences you have had.

Please let us have your stories, poetry, articles, coming events, sad farewells, welcome babies, anniversaries and anything you feel will help those who read our newsletter. Please forward them to us at info@miscarraige.ie or by post to Carmichael Centre, North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7 and marked "Newsletter" and include name and contact details. Your name does not have to be included in the article if you wish to remain anonymous.

JUST A NOTE:

Sometimes, for whatever reason it is not always possible to publish or acknowledge everybody's correspondence. This does not mean it is not important so please keep forwarding your items of news for sharing.

OUR NEWSLETTER

Our newsletter is circulated to members, hospitals and other interested parties and is available on the internet. The opinions in this newsletter are those of the contributors and are not necessarily those of the Miscarraige Association of Ireland.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Just a reminder – your membership may be due for renewal. Our annual membership is €15. We ask members not to send cash in the post – cheques or postal orders please or you can pay online via paypal on our website www.miscarraige.ie

TO MAKE A DONATION / SET UP A DIRECT DEBIT

Some people like to make a donation in memory of a baby they have loved and lost and others like to celebrate the eventual birth of a much wanted baby following a previous miscarriage. Sometimes friends, family and colleagues club together or hold a charity event or fundraiser to make a donation to the Miscarraige Association of Ireland. You can make a donation via the website using a credit card or PayPal. If you would like to set up a direct debit please email info@miscarraige.ie for the Miscarraige Association of Irelands bank details.

However you would like to help, your support is always welcome and very much appreciated.

Thank You

The Miscarriage Association of Ireland



Carmichael Centre, North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7

Telephone: 01-8735702 • Fax: 01-8735737

www.miscarriage.ie • Email: info@miscarriage.ie

www.facebook.com/miscarriage.ie



We are part funded by Tulsa

TUSLA

An Ghineálraocht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency