



it's for all of us

PRESS RELEASE

23 September 2012

"We're walking for Brian Lenihan" - McGuinness and son

Only two weeks to go... Who will you be walking for?

A FIANNA Fail TD and his councillor son are in training for the Susie Long Memorial Walk with their two dogs.

John McGuinness revealed he escapes the stresses of political life by walking his German Shepherd, Mikey.

Long before he turned to politics, the Carlow-Kilkenny TD bred German Shepherds.

Now he and his constituency secretary son, Andrew McGuinness, have vowed to fundraise for a hospice while remembering their political colleague and friend, the late Finance Minister, Brian Lenihan.

They will be joined by John's pet, Mikey, and Andrew's dog, Samoyed Husky, Roxy, for the charity walk in Kilkenny's Castle Park on October 7.

"Brian Lenihan was an inspiration. It's important not to forget people like that," said John McGuinness.

He also said Susie Long had suffered a "terrible illness" but left a remarkable legacy.

"Brian Lenihan was a political colleague but he was also a friend. He took me into his confidence towards the end of his life.

"He knew he was dying and he said that to me but he stayed working to the very end. It's not just politics, it's living out our life to the very best of your ability. He had the ultimate thrown at him, his cancer was not operable, there was no way out, yet he worked it out to the end."

It's almost five years since the death of mum-of-two, Susie Long (42), from bowel cancer in October 2007. The young mother's story touched a nerve after she phoned in RTE Radio One's 'Liveline' to describe how a two-tier health service had condemned her to death because she was a public patient. Her undiagnosed cancer had spread while she waited seven months for a colonoscopy.

The Susie Long Hospice Fund (SLHF) was set up in October 2007 to provide the highest possible quality of end-of-life care for patients and their families through the establishment of a 12-bed hospice in Kilkenny, for the people of Kilkenny and Carlow. The Fund is meeting this challenge through fundraising, increasing awareness of the need and benefits of local hospice care and by lobbying Government for support.

Donations can be made directly to the fund at AIB, High St, Kilkenny, Account No: 3462705, Sort code: 93-31-98. The Susie Long Hospice Fund is a registered charity, number CHY17950. Further details from www.susielonghospice.com



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Mr McGuinness said a hospice for people of Carlow-Kilkenny had cross-party political support, however, "action" is now needed.

"I've listened to people who have been cared for in the hospice setting and I cannot but be impressed by the level of care they get there. A hospice is absolutely essential to the way that we take care of people with cancer."

Mr McGuinness's son, Andrew, signed up for the walk with his dog, Roxy. "Everyone knows Roxy in the constituency office because she sleeps under the desk and in the hall. She's very good natured and locals love calling in to see her," said Andrew.

The Susie Long Hospice Fund (SLHF) has raised over €617,000 to date to provide a hospice for the people of Carlow-Kilkenny. The walk is the latest fundraising initiative and will be led by Kilkenny Mayor Sean O hArgain and RTE broadcaster Joe Duffy.

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