

Leo Leads the Way in support of Organ Donation in Run for a Life

Health Minister Leo Varadkar will lead by example in support of organ donation when he steps out for the Irish Kidney Association's 'Run for a Life' family fun run at Corkagh Park, Dublin 22 this Saturday, 18th October (which will commence at 12 noon).

The Minister will join hundreds of members of the general public, young and old, for the charity fundraiser to demonstrate solidarity in support of the work of the Irish Kidney Association and the promotion of the importance of organ donation. The fun event offers participants of varying levels of fitness the option of walking, jogging or running competitively in either a chip timed 2.5km, 5km or 10km distance and Minister Varadkar has signed up to run the 5km distance.

Speaking in advance of the event, Minister Leo Varadkar said, "I'm looking forward to the 'Run for a Life'. People of all ages are taking part in support of people living with organ failure. I want to encourage more people to sign the organ donor card and help to save lives in the future."

Race Organiser, Colin White explained, "Our annual 'Run for a Life', which is now in its sixth year, is a great day out for all of the family. We are inviting the public to join us in this celebration of life through sport. We are looking for the public to think about it, talk about it and make a commitment to organ donation. The Minister for Health Leo Varadkar's participation in the event, despite his demanding role, sends out a clear message of support for organ donation and transplantation. By running in the event, Minister Varadkar is literally leading by example."

A large number of the members of the successful Irish team who participated in the 8th European Transplant & Dialysis Games in Poland in August this year, will take part in the Fun Run showcasing the success of organ donation. Also supporting the event will be Prof. Jim Egan, Director, Organ Donation and Transplant Ireland, HSE.

Main sponsor of the Run for a Life is Astellas Pharma Co. Ltd. and its Sales and Marketing Director, Denis Fennelly said, "Astellas is proud to be once again partnering with the Irish Kidney Association in Run for A Life 2014. Astellas is committed to Changing tomorrow for patients in Ireland; and raising awareness for organ donation has the potential to really change outcomes for people on transplant waiting lists. We look forward to taking part in what should be a fun day for all!"

At Run for A Life the Registration fee including (a participant medal, as well as soup and a sandwich afterwards) will be €20 for adults and €10 per child and a Family of 2 adults and up to 4 children can register for €45. Chip timing and results will be provided by Precision Timing. For registration and further details log on to: www.runforalife.ie

Donations to support the event can be made via the IKA's website

<http://www.ika.ie/run-for-a-life-2014>

The Irish Kidney Association (IKA) is charged with the promotion and distribution of the organ donor card in Ireland. There are over 1800 people receiving dialysis treatment for end stage kidney failure. There are currently close to 600 people in Ireland in organ failure waiting for organ transplants

including kidney, pancreas, heart, lung and liver. There are over 3000 people in Ireland enjoying extended life thanks to organ donation and transplantation.

The prime role of the IKA is to support patients and their families affected by end stage kidney disease and are either being treated by dialysis or have a working kidney transplant. As the only organisation representing the views of Irish kidney patients, the IKA continually lobbies at all levels on their behalf. The Irish Kidney Association also manages sports programmes for dialysis patients and transplant recipients and manages Transplant Team Ireland's involvement at international sporting events including the biennial World Transplant Games and the European Transplant & Dialysis Games which take place every alternate year.

*For an organ donor card **Freetext the word DONOR to 50050** or visit website www.ika.ie It is also possible to download an organ donor card on smartphones by searching for 'Donor ECard' at the iPhone store or Google Play Store. Your wishes to be an organ donor can also be included on the new format driving licence which is represented by Code 115.*

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