



UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN
PRESIDENT OF IRELAND

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT MICHAEL D. HIGGINS

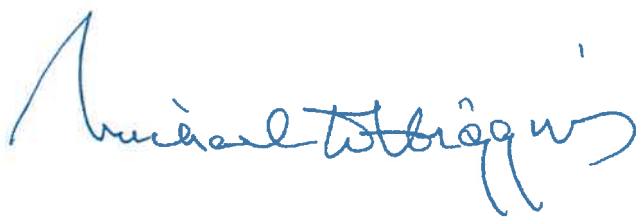
May I send my best wishes to all those taking part in this year's Palliative Care Week. The theme of this year's Week - 'In This Together', reflects the very difficult circumstances in which so many of our medical professionals have been obliged to work in recent months, and the vital contribution they make to our society. It also underlines the importance of solidarity and empathy at times when we face uncertain circumstances.

Palliative care is a critical part of a health care system that aspires to treat all of its patients with dignity and respect. We know that compassion lies at the heart of good medical care, particularly when a patient is approaching the end of life. Those who work in palliative care settings understand that the quality of the life remaining to their patients should be optimised; their physical, emotional and spiritual needs central to all actions and decisions taken throughout this difficult time.

Because of the valuable work of our palliative care teams, many terminally ill people in Ireland are enabled, every year, to die in comfort and peace. For family members, too, the knowledge that their loved ones departed this life with their final wishes honoured and their individual life journeys respected provides an enormous source of consolation and relief throughout their grieving process.

I am delighted to have this opportunity to express my gratitude to all those who work in palliative care for the spirit of solidarity and deep concern for others that is so central to all you do. Your dedication and your great generosity is deserving of our deepest admiration.

I wish you every success during this important awareness raising week, and I thank you all for your vital and inspiring work.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Michael D. Higgins". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'M' and a long, sweeping tail.

Michael D. Higgins
Uachtarán na hÉireann
President of Ireland