

Christmas Cracker



in aid of

ALONE

Helping older people in need



Christmas Cracker Run Register Today!

Date & Time: **Sunday, December 27th at 11am**

Event Details: **5K Run/Walk**

Location: **Santry, Dublin**

Registration Fee: **€20***

*Includes booking fee and chip timing.

This family friendly fun run is open to everyone – from serious runners to costume wearing walkers and everyone in between. The race will begin and end in Morton Stadium Santry, with the route encompassing Northwood and Santry Avenue. Go to www.alone.ie to register. €5 of the registration fee will go directly to ALONE.



Letter from the CEO

As we near the end of another year I would like to thank everyone who has supported us throughout 2015. Your efforts have made a huge difference to the lives of individual older people who are struggling in their later years and we hope that you can continue to support our work in 2016.

The last 12 months has been a time of great change and growth in ALONE where we have realigned our services, increased the number of people we have supported and began operating nationally.

One of our biggest projects has been the development of Befriending Network Ireland. Through this alliance we have linked with 40 Befriending organisations from across the country and delivered training and provided support. The network has also agreed a two year action plan that will look at developing quality standards in the sector. We hope that through this network we can ensure that no older person will be left lonely or unsafe. So far this year we have supported over 700 older people directly, and many more through various partnerships. Everything we do is about supporting older people to age at home as

this is where most older people want to live. However for this to become a reality, we need to ensure that every older person throughout Ireland has access quality supports if they fall into difficulty. Through our partnerships we are working to make this vision a reality.

Christmas is an extremely busy time for ALONE and we are asking you, if possible to make a donation to help us continue our work. We are independent and rely on the generosity of people to ensure we can continue to expand our services to those older people most in need. Every donation, large or small makes an impact and every cent you donate goes directly to front line services. If you can't afford to give anything we would ask you to check in with your older neighbours and friends this holiday season.

Thank you again for your support in 2015 and I would like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year,

Sean Moynihan
Chief Executive Officer

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NEWSLETTER
WINTER 2015

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ALONE is a national organisation that provides services to older people who need additional support to age at home. We work with those who have difficulties with loneliness, ill health, poverty, poor housing or homelessness. We support them through these challenges and link them in with the relevant services they need to live in the community. ALONE is independent and receives no government funding for the day to day running of our services. All our services are quality approved ensuring we are high value and low cost. 100% of all donations goes directly to providing services to older people in need.

Share your Presence this Christmas

We launched our Christmas campaign **"Share your Presence"** on November 25th highlighting the serious issue of isolation and loneliness. At the launch we were joined by Jedward and they called on the public to look out for older people who may be isolated or lonely this holiday season.

Sean Moynihan, CEO of ALONE commented, *"We find that calls for support dramatically increase over the winter period and loneliness is one of the main issues that people come to us for support with. Christmas can be a particularly isolating time for older people who have no loved ones to share it with. With our hectic lifestyles, many people nowadays know little or nothing about their neighbours. We would ask that if you haven't seen your neighbour in a few days, knock in, see if they need anything, or just give them your company and your time."* Moynihan concluded, *"Thankfully most older people will enjoy a happy Christmas surrounded by family and friends but ALONE are*

asking you to think of those older people who are living alone and may be lonely. One in three older people in rural Ireland live on their own, and studies have shown that loneliness can make a person twice as likely to develop Alzheimer's. If you are concerned for anyone in particular you can contact ALONE."

Jedward, ALONE's Christmas Ambassadors commented, *"We are so excited to help ALONE launch their Christmas campaign this year. We think that it's a really important cause and that everyone should take some time to look out for older people in their community. We encourage everyone to spread Christmas cheer by sharing your presence, which is the most important gift of all"*.

ALONE say that there are a number of ways that the public can help an older person this Christmas such as calling by an older persons house to say hello, ensuring they have enough food, medication and heat, bringing them out for a drive or a social event and giving them a hand with their shopping.

Winter Message from ALONE

1. STAY WARM

Don't let indoor temperatures go too low as this could lead to hypothermia. Dress in layers. If you are going outside wear warm socks, a heavy coat, a warm hat, gloves and a scarf. In very cold temperatures, cover all exposed skin. Use a scarf to cover your mouth and protect your lungs.

2. TURN THE THERMOSTAT UP

An active person should turn their thermostat to 21° if active and 24° if you are not. Do make sure your air vents are not blocked as this could cause dangerous levels of a gas called carbon monoxide to build up. It is also worth remembering that your gas or electricity will not be turned off between November and March for non-payment of bills if you are aged 66 years or over and registered on the Special Service Register.

3. EAT WELL IN WINTER

Have regular hot drinks and at least one hot meal per day.

4. STAY ACTIVE

Exercise can keep you warm in winter. If possible, try to move around at least once an hour.

5. AVOID SLIPPING ON ICE

Don't go out if there is ice and snow on the roads. Wear suitable footwear and keep one hand free while walking. Take off shoes as soon as you return indoors as wet shoes can make indoors slippery also.

6. MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

If the weather is particularly bad, you may need to reschedule your doctor or hospital appointments. Keep in touch with your doctor or hospital and let them know if you are concerned about going outside.

7. BE PREPARED FOR AN EMERGENCY

Be prepared for very bad weather by stocking up on food and fresh water. Some Meals on Wheels programs provide frozen emergency food packs that can be heated on days when there is no delivery. Keep batteries, flashlights, extra blankets and a battery-operated radio on hand.

8. LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

Contact your GP to get your free flu jab if you are aged 65 or over. Don't delay in getting treatment for minor winter ailments like colds or sore throats. Visit your local pharmacist for advice on treatment before it gets worse so you can recover quicker.

9. KEEP IN TOUCH

Keep in touch with family, friends and neighbours and don't be afraid to ask for help! If you need additional support, you can call us on 01 679 1032

HOUSING

2015 was a particularly difficult year when it came to housing and homelessness, and unfortunately older people were also severely impacted by the crisis. We saw a huge increase in the number of older people coming to us seeking housing. Some were living in emergency hostels, abusive or unsafe homes and others were being evicted from their private rented accommodation. However we were delighted that we were able to provide homes to 17 new residents. We hope they will all be very happy in their new homes.

Please visit alone.ie to make a donation

ALONE CHRISTMAS DINNER DANCE

On Sunday 29th November almost 200 volunteers and older people attended the annual ALONE Christmas Dinner Dance in the Red Cow Hotel. It is one of the main events on the ALONE calendar and it did not disappoint. We would like to thank everyone for coming, especially our entertainers Lisa Lambe and Simon Morgan, the Dublin Gospel Choir and our band, Adam's Dream. We would also like to thank Nandos for kindly wrapping all our raffle prizes and gifts given last night.



BEFRIENDING

Ann is 79 and contacted ALONE earlier this year as she was feeling isolated after the death of her beloved husband. She was soon matched with her volunteer Collette and hasn't looked back since. The pair get on like a house on fire and Anne sees Collette as "a second daughter". Ann is delighted she made that call to ALONE. "To this day I still tell people it's the best phone call I've ever made." She describes the benefits of her new friendship with Collette as a "great laugh" and cites her wonderful sense of humour as helping her to cope with her recent bereavements. If you would like more information on our Befriending Service please contact 01 679 1032.

##ELFIE4ALONE



This year we have a fun and festive social media campaign to earn some much needed funds for older people in need. We are very grateful to have Dublin's Q102 on board as media partners for this campaign. We are asking everyone to take an #Elfie4ALONE, or a Christmas themed selfie, share it on your Facebook page or Twitter feed and make a donation of just €4 to ALONE by texting **ALONE** to 50300. You then have to nominate your friends to do the same! **Be sure to tag ALONE and Q102 on the posts.**

(One hundred per cent of your donation will go directly to ALONE, unless your provider applies VAT, where a minimum of three twenty five goes to ALONE.)

ALONE'S CAMPAIGNS FOR CHANGE

Campaigning has always been a central part of our work in ALONE and it is something we continued to develop throughout 2015. In the first half of the year we campaigned successfully for the introduction of an independent complaints process for private nursing home residents. During the summer we launched our 'Home First' campaign, where we highlighted the fact that one third of nursing home residents were low to medium supports and could live at home if supported to do so. In September we launched our 'Homeless in all but name' campaign where we called on the government to ensure that a portion of all social housing was set aside for older people, in line with the changing demographic. In 2016 we will continue to use our voice to stand up for the rights of vulnerable older people.

Why are we forcing older people out of their homes?

ALONE believes older people should be supported to live at home.

ALONE
Helping older people in need
Find out more at www.alone.ie