

Marks & Wish2Walk



MARKS WISH TO WALK – Mark's Journey

Mark Dolan is the three year old son of Fidelma and Kevin who hail from Ahascragh, Co Galway. Mark is the twin brother of Sister Maeve who were born five weeks prematurely on the 9th August 2012.

In the early months Mark seemed like any other typically developing infant and was as engaged as his twin sister, and even at his 9 month developmental assessment Mark passed in all areas. However, at the turning of his first birthday it became apparent to his parents that Mark was not reaching typical developmental milestones, like sitting independently, rolling over or crawling, basic things they would have expected at this stage and what his twin sister was doing freely.

At this point Fidelma and Kevin became concerned about Marks progress and sought professional advice both locally and at Temple Street hospital where further more intensive investigations were carried out. After further tests it was evident that Mark suffered from a Motor Delay primarily affecting his lower extremities. At this point to their horror the shocked parents were advised that Mark would probably be WHEELCHAIR BOUND for the rest of his life.

This news as you could imagine caused both parents and close family extreme distress but Fidelma and Kevin refused to accept this as a final outcome and vowed to dedicate all the efforts to provide Mark with a better quality of life.

Fidelama, through her contacts and experience of working on an Early Intervention Team scoured the internet and medical books and after some in-depth analysis sought some private advice from a specialist on this subject.

This led to Fidelma and Kevin attending a clinic in Limerick privately run by a Dr Senthilkumar Periyasamy who specialises in Repetitive Strength Training with a sustained Therapeutic Exercise Programme.

After Dr Senthilkumar's first assessment of Mark in November 2014 his expert advice provided great encouragement and hope to Fidelma and Kevin and he set up a schedule of appointments commencing in January 2015 which involved a comprehensive and intense programme of training specifically for Mark. From day one Fidelma and Kevin have concentrated and dedicated every moment of their life to following through with this treatment which has meant many sacrifices both financially and emotionally since then. This has entailed travelling to Limerick three time a week for a two hour session and hours of intensive home therapy thereafter to keep Marks programme in line. At this point Mark was also receiving regular Physiotherapy from his local Early Intervention Service. All this whilst juggling their full time jobs and while trying to provide a normal family life for their other two children ANNA-MAI [8] and Marks twin Maeve [3]. Obviously the private treatment and constant travelling coupled with child care has drained their financial

resources also, but they have done this unconditionally with the hope that they can provide their son with a better quality of life.

After making significant progress in the early months Dr Senthilkumar advised Fidelma of a surgical procedure which would eradicate the tightness in Marks lower limbs on a permanent basis. Dr Senthilkumar alerted Fidelma to a Neurosurgeon in a clinic in St Louis, Missouri in the USA by the name of DR TS PARK who has carried out more than 3,000 of these Pioneering surgeries on children.

Once again Fidelma researched DR PARK and through a family support group she discovered that DR PARK would be attending a gathering in Dublin in MARCH 2015.

Fidelma and Kevin made a point of attending and arranged a consultation with DR PARK and after assessing Mark he concluded that Mark was an excellent candidate for what he termed Selective Dorsal Rhizotomy (SDR) surgery and suggested that they forward all Marks medical records to the USA for Multidisciplinary screening.

On the 11th of May to their delight, Fidelma and Kevin received an email from America outlining that Marks application was successful and that surgery would follow at the first available slot to Dr.Park. As you can imagine this provided great hope among many other emotions to the couple but then the sudden realisation that other factors would now come into play in their quest for "MARKS WISH TO WALK".

The first issue to deal with was the fact that both parents will have to travel to ST LOUIS and spend up to 5 weeks providing round the clock care for Mark during his post-op and subsequent re-habilitation. This would mean juggling their own home life and that of their other two children, as well as trying to sustain both their jobs and consider their employers of whom they now depend on so much.

However having come to terms with that, the main issue would be that they would now somehow have to raise the enormous amount of 120,000 euro at very short notice to pay for the surgery, equipment and two years after care, which some would have to be paid for up-front.

Having drained most of their resources with the private clinic in Limerick the reality was this undertaking might be beyond them.

After consulting with family and close friends, and accepting that they would move mountains to give their son the best quality of life they can, Fidelma and Kevin have decided to Fundraise in order to fulfil Marks dream.

The theme of the fundraiser is titled "MARKS WISH TO WALK".

A special FACEBOOK page has been set up where donations can be made and we would ask people to kindly donate and indeed to SHARE MARKS PAGE so it can be spread far and wide.

DONATIONS can also be made to A SPECIAL BANK ACCOUNT called AIB Athlone "Marks Wish to Walk" set up under the fundraiser name at any AIB Branch sort code 932264 Account Number 48349059.

The trustees of the monetary donations are local Photographer and businessman GERRY STRONGE OF STRONGES PHOTOGRAPHY, MAIN STREET BALLINASLOE. MR.JOE KEENAN QA FROM AHASCRAUGH WHO IS EMPLOYED AS AN ACCOUNTS MANAGER FOR BRIAN CONNEELY AND CO. BALLINASLOE AND IS ALSO TREASURER OF THE LOCAL SOCCER CLUB AHASCRAUGH UNITED FC. MRS MARY LYNCH LOWVILLE WHO IS HRQMO AT THE ALLIED IRISH BANK IN ATHLONE, ELAINE LOUGHNANE (AUNTIE) , SECRETARY AND KAREN DOLAN (AUNTIE) PRO

please contact the fundraiser Chairman at email seamusconcannon61@gmail.com. OR phone (087) 2121936.

PLEASE EVERYBODY HELP "MARKS WISH TO WALK"

Karen Dolan
PRO
Mark's Wish to Walk Fundraiser
Kdolan@chanellegroup.ie