

Schwartz Community Awards for Saint Francis Hospice

The most powerful Schwartz Round- Christmas Unwrapped

Many of us dread the Christmas festive period when we have had a bereavement, no matter how long ago.

In our hospice we meet many families who find this time of year an extremely difficult time in their lives, as do our staff who support all involved. The families we support no longer look forward to this celebration and have real concerns about Christmas just not being the same; children in particular, having lost a parent or grandparent, can find it very distressing.

The idea to have a Schwartz Round to acknowledge the experience of our bereavement counsellors and Social Workers came to us when we learned that our Family Support Team had prepared a presentation to share. This presentation would highlight the role of a counsellor - both child and adult clients - and gave time to reflect on how they had helped people cope during the time before and then after bereavement.

Each of the 4 panellists told their own story of someone they were supporting during the lead up to Christmas. Hearing the stories, some heart rendering, brought home to the audience the sheer grief felt by adults and children in each of their different ways, and it was very evident that it was bringing to the forefront the panellists own grief and trauma experienced when one of their own loved ones had died.

The round was held on Tuesday the 11th December and the setting was visibly festive. The audience had arrived early to enjoy the feast of Christmas fayre our chef had prepared.

The panel were asked to describe how hearing such sad events had affected them and how they processed the grief they were witnessing and hearing first hand. The power of the round was evident in the connections made between the panellists' experiences and those of the audience. Some of the discussion was extremely revealing about their feelings elicited through their work and personal lives, and the level of safety within the confidentiality was striking. In turn this made the reflections very insightful.

See photos below please



“Christmas unwrapped”

Family Support Services Team



USER VOICES

