



**An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí  
Department of Social Protection**

**[www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie)**

**Minister Ó Cuív launches Carer of the Year Awards**

The **Minister for Social Protection, Éamon Ó Cuív TD**, today (*Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2010*) launched the 2010 Carer of the Year Awards at the Royal College of Physicians, Dublin.

Speaking at the launch, Minister Ó Cuív said: "These awards are an excellent way of highlighting the invaluable work done by carers in communities all around the country and of expressing appreciation for their hard work and commitment. The Carer of the Year Award and the Young Carer of the Year Award allows us to celebrate a special carer, and in doing so to celebrate all carers."

The Carers Association, which is a national voluntary organisation representing carers in the home, organises the Carer of the Year awards each year. The Association offers a range of services for carers through its 16 Resource Centres and two Service Projects.

Minister Ó Cuív continued: "Supporting and recognising carers is and has been a priority of the Government. Over 50,000 carers are now in receipt of either a Carer's Allowance or a Carer's Benefit payment – an increase of 11% on last year. This year alone, we have allocated €726million to support carers through the Carer's Allowance, Carer's Benefit and Respite Care Grant schemes. The weekly Carer's Allowance payment is almost 20% higher this year than in 2006 and more than 147% higher than in 1997. We recognise that carers need help and support in their role and this Government is committed to supporting family carers as much as possible."



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Minister Ó Cuív concluded by saying: "These awards, in addition to highlighting the work of carers, also highlight the great work undertaken by the Carers Association and I want to wish the Association and the sponsor of these awards, Emergency Response, continued success with this initiative which I hope will continue to go from strength to strength."

For details of the nomination process for this year's awards which have a 10 September 2010 closing date, see [www.carersireland.com](http://www.carersireland.com)

**ENDS**

**Note for Editors:**

- The rate of Carer's Allowance for carers over 66 years of age is €239 per week while the rate of Carer's Allowance for someone under 66 is €212 per week.
- Recipients of Carer's Allowance also receive the annual Respite Care Grant, the Household Benefits package and Free Travel.
- The annual Respite Care Grant, which is paid to eligible carers in June each year, is set at €1,700 in respect of each care recipient.
- The half-rate Carer's Allowance was introduced as part of Budget 2007. Persons eligible for Carer's Allowance and another social welfare payment are now entitled to retain this social welfare payment and receive a half-rate Carer's Allowance.