



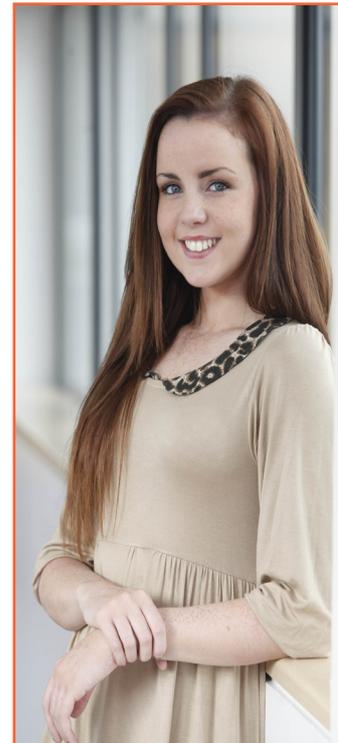
CYSTIC FIBROSIS DOESN'T DEFINE WHO YOU ARE

By Bevin Murphy, PWCF, 17

My name is Bevin Murphy and I am 17 years old.

I am currently preparing for my Leaving Cert. I hope to go onto third level education and study Marketing in DCU. People would often say to me 'how do you cope with the doing the Leaving Cert and having CF?' My response is, I cope like any other Irish teenager doing the leaving cert. Yes, I do have a few obstacles as I miss numerous amounts of school, but with that bit of extra help it is extremely doable, be it coming in early the odd morning to go over what I have missed with the teachers or attending grinds. The advice I would give any other teenager doing their Leaving Cert is to arrange elective IV's with your doctor for during your midterm so you don't miss too much school. That's if you're like me and are in hospital on numerous occasions throughout the year. So far it has worked extremely well for me.

I also sing in my school choir. Music is one of my many interests. I have participated in many choral competitions in Wales. I hear people say, how does she sing with 'bad lungs'? My answer is, why can't I sing with 'bad lungs'. Singing is one of the best exercises to clear my lungs. I take all the medication I can to help my lungs and do exercise to make my lungs stronger. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage teenagers to exercise as it is the key to healthy lungs. I have learnt this from experience.



Bevin is 17 and is currently preparing for her Leaving Cert.



Bevin spoke alongside former President Mary McAleese at the recent opening of the new unit at Crumlin Hospital.

Living with CF has its challenges, like missing out on social events or school when sick. A major thing for me was telling people about my illness. Growing up I used to be embarrassed of what people may think. Over the years I have built the confidence to tell people as nobody thinks differently of me anyway. CF doesn't define who you are, you as a person define yourself.

In the future, I would like to get my degree in marketing and travel to America or Australia. That is one of my dreams. I am also eager to raise awareness of CF throughout the world and speak on behalf of people with CF. I have found throughout the years that teenagers especially are unaware of what CF is and how it affects us. Nothing will hold me back from my dreams, not even having CF. As they say, 'anything is possible if you just believe'.