



EPINews

Newsletter of the School of Public Health

December 2017

WELCOME

Dear Colleagues,

This issue of the EPINews brings 2017 to a close. The year finished on a high with the launch of the School of Public Health, the culmination of [Prof Ivan Perry's](#) tireless leadership and vision over the last 20 years. An event, meticulously organised by [Ms Vicky Murphy](#), PA to Prof Perry, was held in the Aula Maxima, UCC, to mark the occasion. This issue contains details and photos of the momentous day.

Since the last issue, SPHeRE Scholar [Emily Kelleher](#) has successfully defended her PhD thesis "*The implementation of a family-focused lifestyle programme for managing obesity in the community setting in Ireland*". We wish [Dr Kelleher](#) the very best in her future career.

Please circulate the EPINews among your colleagues and direct any queries or comments to me at r.dennehy@ucc.ie

Rebecca Dennehy

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CELEBRATING THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH



A note from the Dean



Dear Colleagues,

This Edition of EPINews contains details of the Launch of the School of Public Health at an event held in the Aula Maxima UCC on November 22nd. This was a significant day for the discipline of Public Health in UCC and also I believe for the College of Medicine & Health and the wider university.

We are very grateful to the Lord Mayor, Cllr Tony Fitzgerald, President Patrick O'Shea and Prof Helen Whelton, Head of the College of Medicine & Health for their warm words of encouragement and support for the School of Public Health at the launch event.

In concept and design, the School of Public Health in UCC is modelled on international schools of Public Health in Britain, Europe and North America. Our core vision is to be at the heart of society's organised efforts to prevent disease and to protect and promote the health and wellbeing of the population.

Public Health is about creating and sustaining the conditions for a healthy society. It is both an academic discipline and a broad multi-disciplinary movement focused on protecting and promoting the health and wellbeing of populations at the local, national and global level. Public Health operates at the intersection of biology, behavior and environment and in this context we use the term environment in the broadest sense of the physical, social, economic

and political environment. Broadly, our focus is on understanding the causes of disease at the population level to inform prevention strategies as opposed to understanding the mechanism of disease at the individual level to inform treatment strategies. While we rely heavily on epidemiological concepts and methods, we draw on inputs, insights and methodological approaches from across the biological, behavioral and social sciences and from history, the arts and humanities. Our core task is to understand and seek to influence trends and patterns in the underlying societal determinants of health and wellbeing.

In Ireland based on the Global Burden of Disease study, over 80% of the burden of suffering and death is potentially amenable to prevention through achievable changes in diet, smoking, physical inactivity and excessive alcohol intake. We can and will make progress on these issues over the coming decade if we move beyond individual level educational and behavioural interventions which over-emphasise personal agency and choice to system level policy changes and interventions in areas such as taxation, public sector procurement and changes to the built environment. We also need to work with others to secure progressive increases in the proportion of our overall health budget that is allocated to prevention. Unfortunately, at present in our health sector the urgent takes priority over the important and we spend less of 5% of our health budget on prevention.

The School of Public Health in UCC will work to advance this agenda through training and capacity building, research, advocacy and the promotion of both social enterprise and enterprises with a social agenda. We will also continue or work on health services and health systems research to help ensure that we get the best possible return on our spending within the health sector.

I would like to acknowledge my colleagues in the school of Public Health both administrative and academic. The growth and development of our discipline over the past two decades reflects their passion for teaching and research, their high level skills and commitment and their continuous striving for excellence. I am deeply grateful to all of my colleagues for their support and commitment to our shared enterprise.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ivan Perry', written over a horizontal line.

Professor Ivan Perry
Dean, School of Public Health
University College Cork

Launching the School of Public Health at University College Cork

"This is not an insignificant achievement and this is a very special day"- Prof Ursula Kilkelly

On the wet morning of November 22nd, the sound of animated chatter echoed through the North Wing at University College Cork. Friends and colleagues gathered in the Aula Maxima under the watchful eyes of past Presidents to mark the official launch of the School of Public Health.

[Prof Helen Whelton](#), Head of College of Medicine and Health, UCC, delivered the opening address and highlighted how the School of Public Health actively contributes to the objectives of University College Cork.

[Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr. Tony Fitzgerald](#) followed, encouraging international guests to explore Cork despite the November rain. Cllr. Fitzgerald stressed the significance of the social determinants of health *"for me health is all about where we live, where we work, our education...this*

broader understanding of health is part of the culture here in the school of Public Health". [UCC President, Prof Patrick O'Shea](#), gave a warm welcome *"as gaeilge"* and captured the importance of community and academic engagement and the need for collaboration to achieve health goals *"I think the opening of this flourishing school of Public Health will serve the wider society... let's work together to keep people healthy"*. Dr Miriam Owens, Public Health Specialist with the Department of Public Health, emphasised the need to address current public health problems but also the importance of looking forward to the health problems of *"future populations"*.



L-r Prof Alicia O' Cathain, Prof Helen Whelton, Prof Kristian Wahlbeck, Prof Ivan Perry, Prof Patrick O'Shea, Dr Miriam Owens, Prof Elizabeth Keane, Mr Edward Murphy



Prof Ivan Perry, Dean, School of Public Health

[Prof Ivan Perry](#), Dean of the School of Public Health was next up to the podium. It is the culmination of Prof Perry's tireless leadership and vision over 20 years that has resulted in the growth of the Department to what is now the School of Public Health. Prof Perry outlined the core vision of the school which is to be at the heart of society's organised efforts to prevent disease and to protect and promote the health and wellbeing of the population. He said the task now is to *"understand and influence trends and patterns in the underlying determinants of health and wellbeing"*. Prof Perry finished by acknowledging the support of his colleagues and his family who were present to celebrate this important day.

[Prof Ella Arensman](#), National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF), congratulated Prof Perry on the establishment of the School of Public Health and highlighted some of the collaborative work on suicide prevention, research and surveillance carried out by the School and the NSRF. Prof Arensman introduced [Prof Kristian Wahlbeck](#), Research Professor, National Institute for Health and Welfare, who drew attention to Ireland and Finland's shared interest in Public Mental Health research. Prof Wahlbeck demonstrated how Public Health interventions in Finland have been effective in reducing suicide rates and improving mental health at a population level.



*L-r Prof John Browne, Prof Helen Whelton, Prof Patrick O'Shea
Prof Ivan Perry, Prof Ella Arensman and Prof Patricia Kearney*

Prof of Health Services Research, [Alicia O'Cathain](#), Director of Medical Care Research Unit, University of Sheffield, discussed variations in health care stating that "policy makers want to offer care closer to home". [Prof Elizabeth Keane](#), Adjunct Professor/Public Health Physician and Dean of Faculty of Public Health Medicine at the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, talked through the journey that led to the establishment of the School of Public Health. [Dr Kieran Keohane](#), Department of Sociology, UCC, discussed the connections between Sociology and Public Health highlighting that "all first year arts and social science students study public health research". Dr Keohane was followed by [Prof Ursula Kilkelly](#), Head, College of Business & Law, UCC, who highlighted the significance of the day and reiterated the importance of collaboration in Public Health efforts "this is not an insignificant achievement and this is a very special day...central to public health is the openness to collaboration and interdisciplinary work". [Prof Sarah Culloty](#), Director, Environmental Research Institute, UCC, next spoke about informing Public Health in a changing environment.



Catching up at the Launch of the School of Public Health

The last speaker of the day Mr Edward Murphy, Project Officer for Tobacco Free Ireland and BSc Public Health and MPH graduate, discussed how he is putting Public Health theory into practice in his current role. Finally, the Cameron Prize was awarded to Eimear Carr for graduating first in class from BSc Public Health. Following the formalities of the day attendees were treated to a healthy lunch designed especially for the event by Food Choice at Work Ltd. [Lauri Gilgan](#), Public Health Nutritionist, collaborated with KSG in creating a unique menu which incorporated traffic light labelling. The successful day ended as it began, with colleagues and friends reminiscing about the past and looking forward to the future of the School of Public Health.



Healthy Lunch with Traffic Light Labelling

Snapshots of the School of Public Health Official Launch



Dr Fiona Geaney and Ms Eileen Williamson



Dr Dervla Hogan, Dr Vera McCarthy and Dr Mary McCarthy



Ms Lauri Gilgan, Ms Samantha Dick, Ms Holly McGrath, Ms Susan Calnan



Dr Sarah Meaney, Ms Karen Mulcahy



*Dr Clionadh Foley-Nolan, Ms Denise Cahill,
Dr Fiona MacLeod and Dr Mary O Mahoney*



Dr Claire Buckley and Ms Bernadette Madden

Following in the Footsteps of Sir Charles Cameron

The Cameron Prize is awarded to the student graduating first in class from the BSc Public Health. The award is named in honour of Sir Charles Alexander Cameron (1830–1921), Public Health officer, who qualified in medicine in Dublin in 1868. He was later elected to the chair of hygiene in the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and held this appointment until his ninetieth year. Cameron's most important work was in the area of public health and he played a key role in improving the living conditions of the Dublin poor. His administration of the sanitary affairs of the city was very effective, contributing to the fall in the city's death rate by 25% between 1901 and 1911 - from one of the highest in Europe to one of the lowest.

The **Cameron Prize** has now been awarded to ten BSc Public Health graduates: Emma Sheehan (2008); Sarah Freeman (2009); Linda O'Keefe (2010); Elaine Meehan (2011); Marsha Tracey (2012); Kate O' Neill (2013); Laura Mc Carthy (2014); Gillian Maher (2015); Kristina Mendelis (2016), and this year (2017) it was awarded at the inauguration of the School of Public Health to Eimear Carr. These high achieving graduates are pursuing career paths in research, in the private and public healthcare sector, as well as in education - in Ireland, the UK and Australia. Whatever their public health role, and wherever they have travelled across the world, they will be following in the footsteps of Sir Charles Cameron.



BSc Graduate Eimear Carr and Prof Ivan Perry

Public Deliberation about Health Planning in Ireland

There is an increasing tendency to reconfigure acute hospital care towards a more centralised and specialised model, particularly for complex care conditions. Although centralisation is presented as 'evidence-based', it often faces public opposition, arising from concerns about future access to services. Plans to downgrade or close Emergency Departments have been particularly controversial. The public reaction to the planned closure of the Emergency Department at the Midlands Regional Hospital in Portlaoise is an example of how contentious such proposals can become.

[Professor John Browne](#) and colleagues in the UCC School of Public Health, Trinity College Dublin and the HSE are running a Health Research Board funded study of how urgent and emergency care is organised in Ireland. The study (known as SIREN) is close to completion and Professor Browne is now presenting the results at public events around the country. He has presented in Cork, Limerick, Galway, Sligo, Tullamore, Waterford and Cavan. There are plans for further events in Dublin and Portlaoise. The goal of these events is to communicate with as broad an audience as possible and, at minimum to exchange information and opinions. Two notable learning points from the meetings are (i) the anxiety among HSE officials about interaction with members of the public, especially representatives of hospital campaign groups and (ii) the difficulty in devoting time and space to members of the public for genuine engagement. The events have allowed for the exchange of information and opinions but are only a first step in the development of a formal approach to public deliberation about health planning in Ireland. It is clear that current approaches to planning do not have enough input and guidance from the public. Professor Browne is hoping to secure funding for the development of a better approach to public engagement and deliberation in this area.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Foley T, Jennings A, Boyle S, Smithson WH. [The development and evaluation of peer-facilitated dementia workshops in general practice](#). Education for Primary Care. 2017:1-8.

Leahy, D., Lyons, A., Dahm, M., Quinlan, D., & Bradley, C. (2017). [Use of text messaging in general practice: a mixed methods investigation on GPs' and patients' views](#). Br J Gen Pract, bjgp17X693065

Sweeney J. 'Point of care morbidity coding - a feasibility study in primary care'. Forum Journal of the Irish College of General Practitioners Volume 34 Number 10 November 2017 p.52 - 54.

Kelleher E, Davoren MP, Harrington JM, Shiely F, Perry IJ, McHugh SM. [Barriers and facilitators to initial and continued attendance at community-based lifestyle programmes among families of overweight and obese children: a systematic review](#) Obes Rev 2017 18 (2): 183-194

Philips CM, Dillon CB, Perry IJ. [Replacement of Sedentary Time with Physical Activity: Impact on Lipoproteins](#). 2017 Dec 7. doi: 10.1249/MSS.000000000001511

Spillane A, Larkin, C, Corcoran P, Matvienko-Sikar K, Riordan F, Arensman E. [Physical and psychosomatic health outcomes in people bereaved by suicide compared to people bereaved by other modes of death: a systematic review](#). BMC Public Health 2017, 17: 939, p 1-16

Visit the School of Public Health website for a full list of [publications](#)

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Kieran Walsh Successful in “Thesis in 3 Minutes” Competition

Dementia and Neurodegeneration Network Ireland (DNNI) is an innovative and ambitious all-Ireland interdisciplinary dementia and neurodegenerative research development initiative. The inaugural conference was held on November 30th in Kings Inn, Dublin and hosted a range of keynote speakers discussing a broad range of issues ranging from developing dementia research networks, getting funding, to living with dementia. DNNI works in partnership with the Structured Population and Health-services Research Education (SPHeRE) network. To showcase the important research being conducted in the field of dementia research, SPHeRE dementia PhD scholars were invited to participate in the ‘Thesis in 3 minutes’ competition. [Kieran Walsh \(UCC\)](#) beat off stiff competition from Emma O’Shea (Dublin City University) and Leona Connolly (Trinity College Dublin) to be crowned ‘Thesis in 3’ winner 2017. The title of Kieran’s presentation was ‘Antipsychotic Prescribing in Dementia: Why does it happen? How can we change it?’ Well done to all participants and to the conference organisers on creating a brilliant interdisciplinary event.



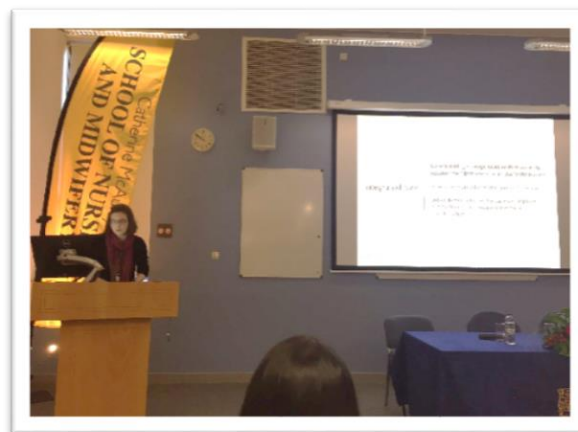
L-r SPHeRE Scholars Emma O’Shea, Leona Connolly and Kieran Walsh

Childrens Research Network 6th Annual Conference

The [Children’s Research Network](#) brings together a wide range of professionals with an interest in research on child and family issues across the island of Ireland. The aim of the Network is to support the research community in Ireland and Northern Ireland and to better understand and improve the lives of children and young people, by creating and maintaining an inclusive, independent, non-profit network. The network’s 6th annual conference was held on the 29th and 30th of November at Chartered Accountants House, Dublin. This year’s theme was “Children and Young People’s Participation”. The conference was opened by Niall Muldoon, Ombudsman for Children and was well attended by delegates from academia, clinical settings and community and statutory organisations. SPHeRE Scholar, [Ms Rebecca Dennehy](#) gave an oral presentation at the conference entitled “A children’s rights-based approach to involving young people in research: An evaluation of a young people’s advisory group as a model for participation”. Rebecca discussed young people’s motivations for getting involved in her PhD research on cyberbullying, their experience of the research process and the outcomes for the young people involved as co-researchers. Rebecca also participated in a round-table discussion on the “Ethics of Participatory Research with Children”. Participants in the discussion considered the ethical challenges faced when conducting research with children and young people and debated possible solutions. Much of the discussion focused on the challenges experienced by researchers when seeking approval from research ethics committees. Rebecca is a member of a Special Interest Group in [Child and Youth Participation](#) within the Children’s Research Network. This group organises events, training workshops and publications and aims to bring together people who can collaborate to advance research actively engaging children and young people, please contact Rebecca for more information.

17th Annual Nursing and Midwifery Research Conference

The 17th Annual Nursing and Midwifery Research Conference was held at Brookfield Health Sciences Complex, UCC, on November 23rd. The conference theme was “*Innovation and New Directions in Healthcare Research and Practice*”. The School of Public Health was represented by [Ms Caragh Flannery](#) and [Ms Fiona Riordan](#) who both gave oral presentations about their qualitative research. Caragh delivered a presentation entitled “*Health care professionals’ experiences of lifestyle management in overweight and obese pregnant women: a qualitative study*”. Fiona presented her qualitative research on the challenges experienced by community-based Clinical Nurse Specialists in supporting the delivery of diabetes care.



Ms Fiona Riordan, School of Public Health

85th European General Practice Research Network Conference

[Aisling Jennings](#), Department of General Practice, delivered an oral presentation at the 85th European General Practice Research Network (EGPRN) Conference held in Dublin in October. Aisling’s presentation focused on GP’s perspectives on the management of behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia. The next EGPRN conference is in Lille in France in May. Abstract deadline is January 15th 2018.

New estimates of the lifetime costs of childhood overweight and obesity on the island of Ireland

On the 20th November 2017, [Professor Ivan Perry](#) and [Dr Seán Millar](#) from the School of Public Health, UCC, Professor Kevin Balanda from the Institute of Public Health in Ireland and Dr Anne Dee from the Department of Public Health, Mid-West Health Service Executive attended the launch of the [safefood](#)-funded report on the lifetime costs of childhood overweight and obesity on the island of Ireland at the Royal College of Physicians in Dublin.

The published report provided direct healthcare and indirect societal cost estimates for the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland as well as an overall estimate of the lifetime cost of childhood overweight and obesity for the island of Ireland. The research also calculated the reduction in lifetime costs attributable to childhood overweight and obesity if there were to be a 1% or a 5% reduction in population mean childhood BMI. The lifetime costs of childhood overweight and obesity report represents the Irish contribution to a larger pan-European Joint Action on Nutrition and Physical Activity (JANPA) project. The overall aim of the JANPA project is to contribute to halting the rise of overweight and obesity in children and adolescents by 2020.

Key findings from the report include the following:

- ❖ The projected lifetime costs to the year 2105 that are attributable to childhood overweight and obesity are €4.6 billion and €2.6 billion for the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland respectively. Thus, the total lifetime cost for the island of Ireland (discounted to 2015 rates) was estimated at €7.2 billion.
- ❖ The indirect societal costs account for 79% of total estimated lifetime costs in the Republic of Ireland and 74% of the costs for Northern Ireland.
- ❖ The estimated excess lifetime cost attributable to childhood obesity and overweight for the Republic of Ireland (discounted to 2015 values) was €16,036 per person; the equivalent estimate for Northern Ireland was €22,647 per person.
- ❖ A 1% and 5% reduction in population mean childhood BMI would be associated with a €270 million and €1.1 billion (Republic of Ireland) and €95.8 million and 396.8 million (Northern Ireland) reduction in projected lifetime costs, respectively.



L-r Professor Kevin Balanda (Institute of Public Health in Ireland), Dr Cliodhna Foley-Nolan (Director, Human Health & Nutrition, [safefood](#)) and Professor Ivan Perry (School of Public Health, UCC) at the launch of the lifetime costs of childhood overweight and obesity research report at the Royal College of Physicians

Research lead, Professor Ivan Perry stated “*The distribution of estimated costs between direct healthcare and indirect societal costs are in agreement with previous research and indicate that most of these costs are borne in adulthood rather than childhood. The findings on the scale of these costs and the future burden on society should engender a sense of urgency on the need for broad-ranging and effective public policy to tackle the epidemic of overweight and obesity in childhood. Policy initiatives such as the tax on sugar-sweetened drinks and measures designed to promote walking and cycling among children have the potential to yield substantial savings within a relatively short time.*” A link to the full report and key infographics can be found [here](#).

Making an Impact

Researchers from the School of Public Health appear to have the “impact-factor” when it comes to obesity reviews. In November, [Dr Emily Kelleher](#) and colleagues from the School of Public Health had an article published in [Obesity Reviews](#). With an Impact Factor of 7.9, Obesity Reviews is the [World Obesity Federation's](#) highest cited journal and publishes reviews from disciplines related to obesity. Dr Kelleher's paper entitled “[Barriers and facilitators to initial and continued attendance at community-based lifestyle programmes among families of overweight and obese children: a systematic review](#)” investigated factors influencing attendance at community-based lifestyle programmes among families of overweight or obese children. A paper co-authored by Dr Douglas Hamilton, Specialist Registrar in Public Health, HSE, Dr Anne Dee, Specialist in Public Health Medicine, HSE, and Professor Ivan Perry, School of Public Health, has been accepted for publication in Obesity Reviews. The paper entitled “*The lifetime costs of overweight and obesity in childhood and adolescence: a systematic review*” is in production with publication date to follow. [Dr Karen Matvienko-Sikar](#) and colleagues have also had a paper accepted by Obesity Reviews entitled “*Parental experiences and perceptions of infant complementary feeding behaviours: A qualitative evidence synthesis*”

Food Choice at Work is One 2 Watch

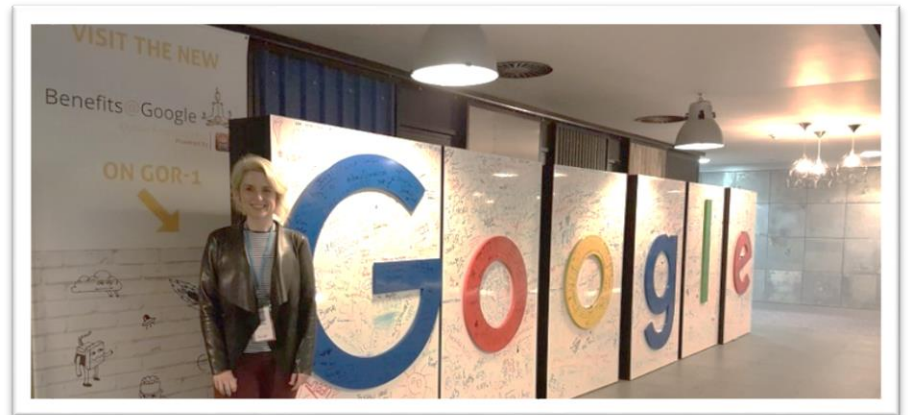
Food Choice at Work (FCW) is the first spin-out company from the School of Public Health. Dr Fiona Geaney first developed Food Choice at Work (FCW) under the supervision of Professor Ivan Perry as part of her doctorate training in Public Health Nutrition within the School of Public Health. Food Choice at Work is a leading edge healthy eating management system for employees that was developed from over 6 years (2011-2016) of comprehensive scientific research. It operationalises healthy eating within businesses. The company uses employee centric methods to improve employee health and provides a data driven return on investment for employers by improving employee health and reducing absenteeism. Food Choice at Work deals directly with corporate catering providers, workplace stakeholders and employees to make fundamental positive changes in how food in the workplace is purchased, prepared and presented.

In October, Dr Fiona Geaney, CEO, was invited to speak at the HRB's 'Ones2watch' conference in Dublin. This conference was organised by the HRB as a networking event for early and mid-career stage HRB funded researchers. Fiona was asked to showcase her career journey as a public health entrepreneur who is actively translating research into everyday workplace practice to fellow post-doctorates and research fellows.

Food Choice at Work were selected by Google to attend their 'StartUponomics@Google' event which was held in November. For this event, Google select and invite a total of 40 companies worldwide that they believe are capable of changing the world for good. The event is a hands-on workshop with leading experts in human behaviour research and behavioural economics. The invitation included funding of €1,500 for two Food Choice at Work team members to attend.



Dr Fiona Geaney (centre) at the Ones 2 Watch Conference



Dr Fiona Geaney at the 'StartUponomics@Google' event



From L-r Representative from Award Sponsor QuintilesIMS, Aisling Jennings (Dept. GP, UCC), Tony Foley (Dept. GP, UCC), Siobhan Boyle (Dept. GP, UCC), Katherine Thackeray (Dept. GP, UCC), Lloyd Mudiwa (Editor of the Irish Medical Times), Chris Donoghue (Newstalk)

Irish Healthcare Awards

Congratulations to our colleagues in the Department of General Practice. The PREPARED (Primary Care Education, Pathways and Research in Dementia) project led by Dr Tony Foley, received an award for educational project of the year at the Irish Healthcare Awards in the Mansion House, Dublin on November 16th. The Irish Healthcare Awards celebrate and recognise innovation, excellence and achievement in the Irish healthcare sector.

International Public Health Merit Scholarship Student Graduates

The School of Public Health's Master of Public Health (MPH) programme is very fortunate to attract outstanding applicants, from all walks of professional life, from within and outside of healthcare. With the Online MPH now available, students from all over the world can avail of the programme. In 2014 and 2015, competitive merit scholarships to undertake the MPH were offered to students from low and middle income countries (LMICs). Students had to be a national of a LMIC and work in an area of public health as a decision maker and influencer of change within their country for at least 5 years. [Nike Adedeji](#), from Nigeria, benefited from this scholarship and proudly graduated from the online MPH programme in November 2017. Nike, is the National Program Specialist for Family Planning and Reproductive Health Care and Support at the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Office in Nigeria. She has more than 20 years of professional experience in Public Health as a registered pharmacist working in logistics management, training and social development in reproductive health care and support as well as HIV prevention. The MPH was Nike's second masters as she also holds an MBA. We congratulate Nike on her great achievement and wish her well with future endeavours.



Nike Adedeji at the conferring ceremony at UCC

Tis' the Season-In aid of Cork Simon Community

The housing crisis is pushing people into homelessness and preventing people from leaving homelessness. The Emergency Shelter in Cork is overflowing with an average of 53 people per night relying on a Cork Simon emergency bed. People are staying for longer and longer in emergency accommodation because they have no other options. The Cork Simon Community works in solidarity with men and women who are homeless in Cork, offering housing and supporting their journeys back to independent living. The School of Public Health were delighted to participate in Cork Simon Community's Christmas Jumper Day to support this worthy cause. PhD Student



Festive fun in aid of the Simon Community at the School of Public Health Christmas Party

Caragh Flannery organised the event to coincide with the annual Christmas party. Even though technically not sporting a jumper, Brendan Palmer beat off stiff competition to win the 'Best Jumper Award' for his festive tie complete with working Christmas lights. Lots of fun was had and €300 was raised for a worthy cause. For more information about Cork Simon Community please visit <http://www.corksion.ie>

Supporting World AIDS Day

The School of Public Health was delighted to support World AIDS Day on December 1st by wearing Red Ribbons in solidarity with its partners in the [Sexual Health Centre in Cork](#).

There was a large increase in new HIV notifications between 2014 and 2015. Advances in research, testing and treatment means that early diagnosis is crucial to improved outcomes. In response to this the *Know Now* programme was launched by an Taoiseach Leo Varadkar in 2016. *Know Now* is a Rapid HIV testing, volunteer led programme. The Sexual Health Centre works in partnership with GOSHH in Limerick and HIV Ireland in Dublin to train volunteers to provide community based testing to MSM in non-clinical settings. It involves a finger prick test with results being available in one minute. *"Thanks to continued funding from the HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme the Sexual Health Centre, as part of Know Now, is able to provide Rapid HIV testing in our centre and in a number of non-clinical venues"* says [Dr Martin Davoren](#), Executive Director of the Sexual Health Centre and former Post-Doctoral Researcher with the School of Public Health. On World AIDS Day, Know Now volunteers with the Sexual Health Centre provided free Rapid HIV testing at Chambers Bar in Washington Street. *"We have been offering testing in Chambers for a number of years and the testing evenings there are always very well attended. Everybody has a HIV status"*

In 2016, the U=U campaign was launched. Its aim was to raise awareness around the fact that a person living with HIV, with an undetectable viral load, cannot transmit HIV to another person. It is very important that people who engage in unsafe sex test regularly for HIV. *"Knowing your status allows you to access specialist care and prevents onward transmission to sexual partners"* says Martin. *"However, the stigma surrounding HIV remains invasive, covert and consistent"*. The centre facilitates a support group for people living with HIV and also offers counselling and support to individuals living with HIV, their partners or other family members. Check out their website: www.sexualhealthcentre.com Follow them on Twitter, Like on Facebook or telephone on 021 4276676 to make an appointment. For further details contact info@sexualhealthcentre.com.



School of Public Health staff supporting World Aids Day on December



National Suicide Research Foundation supporting World AIDS Day

MEET...



Dr Karen Matvienko-Sikar

Dr Karen Matvienko-Sikar

[Dr Karen Matvienko-Sikar](#) is a health psychologist, currently working in the School of Public Health as a HRB Interdisciplinary Capacity Enhancement (ICE) Postdoctoral Research Fellow. Karen's background is in applied health psychology; she completed her PhD in the School of Applied Psychology in UCC in July 2015. Her PhD research was focused on developing and evaluating psychological well-being interventions for use during pregnancy. Karen is currently working on the HRB ICE funded study Choosing Healthy Eating for Infants Health (CHERISH). This research is focused on developing, implementing and evaluating an infant feeding intervention to prevent childhood obesity. As part of this research Karen is also developing an infant feeding core outcome set for childhood obesity prevention interventions. Karen's main research areas of interest are perinatal health and well-being, infant feeding and childhood obesity, and parenting stress. Karen is also interested in measurement, the use of biomarkers of well-being, experimental approaches to improving health and well-being outcomes.

Did you know? Karen recently started running and wishes she had done so sooner. She can also speak Brazilian Portuguese (as her husband is Brazilian).

UPCOMING EVENTS & TRAINING

January

[SPHeRE Network 4th Annual Conference](#) 11th January 2018, Dublin

February

[Centre for Behaviour Change Conference](#) Feb 21st-22nd 2018, London

[Diabetes Ireland Conference and Exhibition 2018](#) 23rd February 2018, Dublin

March

[20th International Conference on Occupational Health and Safety](#) 12-13th March 2018, Miami

April

[Society for Behavioural Medicine 39th Annual Scientific Meeting and Sessions](#) 11th -14th April 2018, New Orleans

[32nd International Congress on Occupational Health - ICOH 2018](#) 29th April – 4th May 2018, Dublin

May

[16th Qualitative Methods Conference](#) 1st -3rd May 2018 Banff, Alberta, Canada

[International Forum on Quality and Safety in Healthcare](#) 2nd-4th May 2018, Amsterdam

[86th EGHRN Conference](#) 10-13th May, Lille, France

[The Inaugural IBTN Summer School: Developing Behavioural Interventions and Conducting High-Quality Trials](#) 21st-26th May 2018, Montreal, Canada

[25th European Congress on Obesity](#), 23-26th May 2018, Vienna

June

[International Society of Behavioural Nutrition and Physical Activity \(ISBNPA\)](#) 3-6th June 2018, Hong Kong

[11th International Conference on Workplace Bullying and Harassment](#) 5th-8th June 2018, Bordeaux

[2018 International Health Conference](#) 28-30th June, Oxford

July

[The 47th Annual Scientific Meeting of the Society for Academic Primary Care](#) 11-12th July 2018, London

August

[32nd Annual Conference of European Health Psychology Society](#) 21st – 25th August 2018, Galway

September

[19th Nursing Ethics Conference and 4th International Ethics in Care Conference](#) 1-2nd September, Cork

[5th UK Congress on Obesity](#) 6-7th September, Newcastle

October

[24th Annual Qualitative Health Research Conference](#) 27-29th October 2018, Halifax, NS, Canada

November

[11th European Public Health Conference](#) 28th November-1st December 2018, Cankarjev Dom, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Ongoing

[Stata courses](#)

[Stata training](#)

[Qualitative Research Methods Behaviour Change](#)

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