



Issue 35 | December 2019

CoMH eNEWS

College of Medicine and Health, UCC



UCC

University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

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CoMH eNews is intended for circulation among staff and students of the College of Medicine and Health, UCC. Extracts from CoMH eNews should not be published without the permission of the editor.



Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year



Scholarships



Paramedical Science



Celebrating 25 Years



Recognition Awards



NUI HH Stewart Prize





Dear Colleagues,

December is upon us and the campus is beautifully adorned with Christmas decorations and lights as students and staff celebrate the festive season and get into Christmas spirit. This is the perfect time of year to reflect on key milestones and activities from across the College.

A key milestone was reached by the School of Nursing and Midwifery, which celebrates its rich twenty-five year history this year. A beautifully-produced publication celebrates this anniversary and an exhibition in the Jennings Gallery brings it to life. I would encourage everyone to take the time to read this book, visit this exhibition, and take in the achievements of this highly-ranked School.

This year I have had the pleasure of attending numerous wonderful events, many of which you will have read about in previous editions of this newsletter. Scarcely a week goes by without the College being involved in another important event. In the last few weeks we have had the Undergraduate Quercus College Scholarships, Quercus Entrance Scholarship Awards, the Medical Graduates Association Annual Conference, the first award ceremony for the Diploma in Paramedical Science, and the UCC Alumni Achievement Awards, to name but a few.

The outstanding calibre of work being done throughout the College is also clearly evident in the number of new academic programmes which have been launched in 2019 or are set to launch in 2020. These impressive new additions to our curriculum are a testament to the commitment to innovative

education in our College. This commitment has been widely acknowledged and I am delighted to say that many of our staff have been recognised both internally and externally through a large number of prestigious awards this year. Congratulations to all!

I would like to take this opportunity to commend all involved with UCC Community Week 2019, with events from across the College of Medicine and Health embodying the spirit of community engagement which defined the week, and indeed the year.

As the end of 2019 approaches, I am struck by the changes that have taken place across the College, which is reflected in the many new faces that joined us this year. I want to extend a warm welcome to you all, and offer my sincere gratitude to all our leavers and retirees this year.

I would like to thank you all most sincerely for your hard work and diligence throughout 2019.

I hope you all enjoy reading our end of year newsletter and would like to thank all the contributors!

Wishing you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Professor Helen Whelton

Head of College of Medicine and Health
University College Cork



A Glance at Professor Helen Whelton's Recent Activities

On the 16th of November Professor Whelton gave the closing address at the Medical Graduates Association Annual Conference. The conference is a multidisciplinary graduate meeting for all medical graduates, staff and friends of University College Cork organised by the Medical Graduates Association Committee.

Pictured left: Professor Liam Plant, Vice Dean for Clinical & Strategic Partnerships CoMH, with Professor Whelton at the MGA Annual Scientific Conference reception in the Aula Maxima. Photo: Donagh Glavin



In late November, Professor Helen Whelton introduced Professor John Calvin Coffee at the UCC Alumni Achievement Awards, where he was honoured for his discovery of a new organ: the mesentery.

Photo: Clare Keogh

On the 2nd of November Professor Whelton attended the Quercus Entrance Scholarship Awards ceremony, which are offered to UCC students on the basis of results in the Irish Leaving Certificate Examination or equivalent.

Pictured right (l-r): Front row: Professor Stephen Byrne, Head of the School of Pharmacy; Professor John O'Halloran, Deputy President and Registrar at UCC; Professor Helen Whelton; Professor Aideen Sullivan, Programme Director BSc Medical & Health Sciences. Back row: Recipients of the 2019 Keliher Scholarships.



New Horizons Research Conference 2019



Pictured above: Cathriona Murphy, Winner of Best Oral Presentation, pictured with Professor Paula O'Leary, Head of School of Medicine.

The 6th annual New Horizons Research Conference sponsored by the School of Medicine and organised by the Research and Postgraduate Affairs Committee took place in the Devere Hall, Aras na MacLeinn on Thursday, 5th of December 2019.

The conference was opened by Dr Liam Fanning. The conference showcased the diverse range of high calibre translational research from undergraduate research, postgraduate research, post-doctoral research and clinical research. Booklet available **HERE**.

The day was divided into 3 sessions. Each session encompassed a stimulating mixture of oral presentations and lectures by prominent clinician scientists and academic staff. There was also a moderated poster session with 160 posters. The Conference was awarded 5 CDP credits by the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland.

The conference concluded with a prize-giving ceremony by Professor Paula O'Leary; with awards being distributed for the overall prize of the best oral, the best elevator pitch presentation, the best poster and a highly commended poster prize.

Congratulations to all winners!

Cathriona Murphy, School of Medicine, won the Oral prize for her presentation titled '*Prevalence of Undiagnosed Obstructive Sleep Apnea in an Elective Surgical Patient Population.*'

Andrew Mazurek, School of Medicine won the Elevator pitch presentation for his presentation titled '*A five-year retrospective review of fatalities involving novel psychoactive substances in Southern Ireland.*'

The best poster prize was awarded to **Emma Birchall**, School of Medicine for her poster titled '*Has there been a reduction in codeine-related intentional drug overdose presentations to Irish hospitals following national guidance in 2010?*'

The Highly Commended poster prize was awarded to **Martina Mazzocchi**, Dept of Anatomy and Neuroscience for her poster titled '*Gene co-expression analysis identifies histone deacetylase 5 and 9 expression in midbrain dopamine neurons and as regulators of neurite growth via the bone morphogenetic protein-smad pathway in cells overexpressing.*'



Pictured above (l-r): Dr Suzanne McCarthy, Geraldine McCarthy, Clara Heinrich, Eoin Hurley, Mick Murphy, Daniela Dicken, Richard McCarthy, Damien Craven and Dr Maria Donovan.

UCC Community Week 2019 kicked off on the 6th of October, with events from across the College of Medicine and Health embodying the spirit of community engagement which defined the week.

Professor Ivan Perry: What we should eat - a Public Health view

On Monday 7th Professor Ivan Perry gave a talk entitled *What we should eat - a Public Health view*. In this talk Professor Perry addressed the apparently contentious issue of what we should eat. He drew on the writer Michael Pollan's succinct summary of dietary recommendations: "Eat real food. Not too much. Mostly plants." In this context, real food is defined as food that "doesn't have a long ingredient list, isn't advertised on TV, and it doesn't contain stuff like maltodextrin or sodium tripolyphosphate", i.e. highly processed food. He highlighted the need to focus on healthy dietary patterns as opposed

UCC Community Week 2019

to a narrow focus on specific foods or nutrients and he presented the evidence suggesting that a Mediterranean type dietary pattern is associated with health, wellbeing and longevity. The importance of eating for planetary health was also highlighted and in particular the need to reduce and potentially eliminate meat from our diets given the extent to which it is associated with high levels of greenhouse gas emissions while also threatening additional planetary boundaries such as freshwater use, land use, biodiversity and the nitrogen and phosphorus cycles. In the presentation Professor Perry briefly addressed the causes of ongoing spurious controversies on diet and health such as those related to the role of dietary salt and saturated fat in cardiovascular disease. Dietary data are complex with many inter-correlated variables and complex statistical issues such as adjustment for under-reporting and total energy intake, displacement effects, and choice of reference dietary categories. These technical issues are compounded by the role of powerful commercial vested interests that are promoting foods high in sugar, saturated fat and salt.

Hands for Life CPR training course

On the 6th and 7th, the ASSERT Centre and the Health & Safety Office for Student Activity collaborated with the Irish Heart Foundation to offer free 'Hands for Life' CPR training sessions in the River Lee Hotel. The course concentrated on recognising cardiac arrest, making the emergency call, listening to the call taker and knowing your Eircode. Candidates then got to practice compression-only CPR on a mannequin.

Awareness of how to use an AED, how to help someone who is choking, how to perform CPR on a child, recognising stroke, and the difference between a cardiac arrest and a heart attack were also covered. The sessions had full attendance and were a rousing success for all involved. Further sessions will take place in Cork in January 2020 - for more details, click [HERE](#).

Journal Club: Engaging the public in understanding health research

On the 9th of October the School of Pharmacy, in conjunction with Carrigaline Community First Responder Group, held their inaugural Journal Club event. This event was organised by Dr Suzanne McCarthy and Dr Maria Donovan with the aim of engaging the wider community in health research and to demystify how research is conducted and disseminated. Another important aspect to this event was that the journal club was led by three 5th year pharmacy students (Daniela Dicken, Clara Heinrich, and Eoin Hurley), thus promoting the skill of communicating research within our student cohort. The Carrigaline Community First Responder Group comprises trained volunteers who assist the community by attending cardiac or respiratory arrest and choking emergencies and so research into cardiovascular health was chosen as the theme for the Journal Club. This event was extremely successful with all those involved reporting the value that is to be gained by involving the public in health research.



Dr Angela Flynn elected President of the Irish Federation of University Teachers

Dr Angela Flynn, a Lecturer in the School of Nursing & Midwifery, has been elected to the position of President of the Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT). Angela has been involved in IFUT in UCC for many years, having been elected to the position of Branch Secretary, and subsequently was the first female Chair of the UCC branch. In her time in this position, the Cork branch continued to grow and remains the largest branch in the organisation. She has a deep and enduring interest in matters of equality and social justice, having completed a PhD (Social Sciences) examining Ireland's unequal health care system. She has published in this area and has a particular interest in examining health inequities, as well as preparing health professionals to understand the social determinants of health.

“The biggest issues for IFUT and our members at the moment are the use of increasingly precarious employment practices and the related issue of inadequate state funding of higher education” says Angela. She hopes that IFUT and the Irish Higher Education Institutes can work together on these areas to achieve decent working conditions for all who work in Irish colleges and universities.

IFUT is the primary union for academics and researchers in Ireland, representing lecturers, professors, researchers and professional librarians. In her role as President, Angela will be working closely with IFUT head office in Dublin, with other trade unions in Ireland, particularly the other teacher unions, and will have an international perspective through IFUT's membership of TUAC, the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD.

For more information, see www.ifut.ie



Professor Chris Lynch awarded Principal Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy

Professor Chris Lynch of the Cork University Dental School & Hospital has been awarded the prestigious Principal Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (PFHEA).

Professor Chris Lynch is Professor & Consultant in Restorative Dentistry at UCC. He is Editor-in-Chief of Journal of Dentistry. He is also Vice Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. Chris holds a Senior Doctorate (DDSc) from Cardiff University (2019), and has been previously awarded the Award of Excellence in Dental Education from the Association for Dental Education in Europe (2014).

Fellowship demonstrates a personal and institutional commitment to professionalism in learning and teaching in higher education. There are only 5 Principal Fellows of the HEA in Ireland across all disciplines, which clearly demonstrates what a tremendous honour it is for Professor Lynch to join such a select group.

Further information on what Principal Fellowship of the HEA means can be found **HERE**.



Professor Mary Horgan honoured with UCD Alumni Award in Health and Agricultural Sciences

In late November, Professor Mary Horgan, School of Medicine, was awarded the UCD Alumni Award in Health and Agricultural Sciences. Professor Horgan is a consultant in infectious diseases at Cork University Hospital, and a world-renowned expert in infectious diseases. She served as the Dean of Medicine in UCC from 2013–2017. She is also the President of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland – the first female in this role since its establishment in 1654.

The College congratulates Mary on this well-deserved recognition of her achievements and dedication to her field.

Pictured above (l-r): Professor Andrew Deeks, President of UCD; Professor Mary Horgan, School of Medicine UCC; and Professor Michael Keane, Dean of the School of Medicine UCD.

Irish Gerontological Society's Annual and Scientific Meeting



This year's Irish Gerontological Society's Annual and Scientific Meeting took place in Cork from 26th-28th September, with a vibrant scientific programme around the theme of 'Innovation, Advances and Excellence in Ageing', and over 430 delegates, the biggest attendance ever at the meeting. UCC was a partner in the conference, with the School of Medicine playing a leading role.



Dr Suzanne Timmons, Centre for Gerontology and Rehabilitation, and Professor Denis O'Mahony, Department of Medicine, chaired the local organising committee, with support from UCC researchers across several schools and departments. The UCC ISIS21 Ageing Cluster held a "road to the IGS" workshop in May to maximise student and staff participation in the event, contributing to a strong UCC presence among the presentations and posters. The School of Medicine went on to win three prizes at the IGS:



1. Centre for Gerontology and Rehabilitation / Tyndall: User Preferences for the Design of Wearable Technology Systems - A Scoping Review. Clíona O'Riordan, Lorna Kenny, Salvatore Tedesco, Marco Sica, Colum Crowe, John Barton, Suzanne Timmons, Brendan O'Flynn.

2. Centre for Gerontology and Rehabilitation / Tyndall / CUBS / Parkinson's Association of Ireland: An Exploration of the Feasibility and Acceptability of Wearable Technology in Parkinson's Disease. Lorna Kenny, Clíona O'Riordan, Tony Wilkinson, Mary O'Sullivan, Janis Agurjanovs, Salvatore Tedesco, Marco Sica, Colum Crowe, John Barton, Suzanne Timmons.

3. Department of Geriatric Medicine / School of Pharmacy: Medication Related Quality of Life (MRQoL) in Amulatory Older Adults with Polypharmacy and Mult-morbidity - a Measurable Outcome? Emma Jennings, Katrine Jorgensen, Natasha Lewis, Stephen Byrne, Paul Gallagher, Denis O'Mahony.

Picture 1: Professor Jonathan Drennan, School of Nursing giving a keynote lecture at the IGS.

Picture 2: Ms Lorna Kenny, CGR researcher receiving a prize for her oral presentation from Dr Diarmuid O'Shea, President IGS.

Picture 3 (l-r): Dr Diarmuid O'Shea, President IGS; Ms Ide O'Shaughnessy, MSc in Older Person Rehabilitation student 2018 (receiving a prize for her oral presentation); Dr Suzanne Timmons, CGR (co-chair local organising committee); Ms Rose Galvin, Vice-President IGS.

The 5th Irish Street Medicine Symposium, 27 & 28 September 2019

The fifth Irish Street Medicine Symposium took place on the 27th and 28th of September, in the Metropole Hotel and Western Gateway Building in UCC. The event brought together a growing community of health and social care workers, academics, policy makers and service users from around Ireland, to improve health outcomes for the most vulnerable in society, such as those who are homeless, people who use drugs, prisoners and migrants.

The event this year was hosted by the Adult Homeless Integrated Team of Cork Kerry Community Healthcare and Safetynet Primary Care with support from HSE Social Inclusion; the Department of General Practice at University College Cork, Crosscare and Cork City Council

Over the two days, attendees worked together to combat service fragmentation, share information and innovations that break traditional ways of working, and created effective health care solutions for the most challenging cases and situations. The symposium was an excellent networking opportunity which inspired collaboration and information-sharing between delegates. Attendees were encouraged to move away from the insular ways of working, and devise solutions together to improve health outcomes for the most disadvantaged in society.

Presentations and workshops covered a wide range of topics representing issues facing marginalised groups, and innovative initiatives designed to improve access to care. The first ever Hospital Consultant in Inclusion Health Medicine - Dr Cliona Ní Cheallaigh, St James Hospital - and

Ciaran Browne, HSE General Manager, National Acute Operations, presented on the hospital experience for people who are homeless and provided an update on the innovative homeless hospital discharge programme.

Bob Jordan, National Housing First Director, updated attendees on the national roll-out of Housing First programmes which provides rough sleepers in long term homelessness with permanent housing and necessary wrap-around health and social supports. Chris O'Donnell, who experienced being homeless, shared insights into the impact of stigma and depression arising from her experience. NGOs such as Merchants Quay Ireland (MQI) and the Dublin Simon Community (DSC) shared learning from implementing initiatives such as naloxone (the antidote to heroin overdose) Training & Prescribing and alcohol detox programmes.

Mr Joe Doyle, HSE Social Inclusion Office, commended the joint effort to improve access to health services for marginalised communities: *"Poverty and social exclusion have a direct impact on the health and wellbeing of the population. This annual event is a demonstration of the partnership approach, supported by the HSE, to improve access to mainstream and targeted health services for people from disadvantaged groups and reduce inequalities in health."*

Professor Colin Bradley, Dept of General Practice, UCC, said of the event: *"We are delighted to support this event again which resonates closely with learning about the complex relationships between social deprivation*

and health that we explore in our research and endeavour to impart to our students."

Key themes of the event also highlighted the issue of high prevalence of mental illness among the homeless population, and the relatively new understanding of the role trauma has to play in addiction and exclusion. The issue of migration and vulnerability sees the 'global homeless' in the form of asylum seeker and other migrant groups appear in increasing numbers in emergency accommodation requiring agencies expand their remit to include this emerging vulnerable group.



Pictured above (l-r): Dr Anna Marie Naughton, Adult Homeless Integrated Team, Dr Raegan Murphy, School of Applied Psychology, Dr Louise Crowley, School of Law, Dr Austin O'Carroll, North Dublin GP Training Scheme discussing issues around building academic community partnerships.



New programmes across the College on the horizon for 2020

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of many across the College a wealth of new programmes are underway, with more scheduled to commence in 2020.

MSc Hearing Balance and Communication

This programme was launched as a Continuing Professional Development course with a full programme.

MSc Clinical Trials

This programme builds on a successful postgraduate certification in Clinical Trials. The MSc was launched in September 2019 to great success.

MMedSc Sports and Exercise Medicine

This MSc presents a reimagining of an existing programme to include evidence-based practice and the use of exercise as a prescription.

BSc Hons Paramedic Studies

This is a full level 8 course following on from the BSc Hons Paramedic Studies – Practitioner Entry.

MSc Therapeutic Radiography

This programme is in response to the new National Cancer Care Plan.

PhD – Occupational Science

This programme gained full European Union Horizon 2020 funding. This programme will be part of an international collaboration with three other universities (Lulea University, Sweden; Queen Margaret University, Scotland; Zurich University, Switzerland) and involves mobility of eight students who will spend time at two of the four universities involved.

School of Medicine introduces INSPIRE lecture series



In line with the Connected Curriculum Framework outlined in the UCC Academic Strategy 2018-2022, the School of Medicine has introduced the INSPIRE lecture series during the current academic year. This series of lectures is delivered to first year medical students across both semesters of the 2019/2020 academic year. This initiative is designed to improve medical students' research capacity and foster an understanding of how an evidence base is acquired, and how it is applied in clinical practice. INSPIRE will involve a series of scientific talks from research-active academic and clinical staff at UCC School of Medicine who are at the forefront of advances in basic and clinical research.

The first of the INSPIRE lectures was delivered on October 2nd by Dr Sharon McKenna (pictured), Principal Investigator at the Cork Cancer Research Centre. The title of her talk was "Autophagy in cancer: can we translate it?". The INSPIRE series was developed by Dr Colm O'Tuathaigh (Medical Education Unit), Dr Collette Hand (Department of Pathology), and Dr John MacSharry (School of Medicine/Microbiology).

Pictured right: Dr Sharon McKenna, Principal Investigator at the Cork Cancer Research Centre.





Catherine McAuley School of Nursing and Midwifery Celebrates 25 years: 1994-2019

Above (l-r): Emeritus Professor Geraldine McCarthy, Founder and first Professor of Nursing in UCC; Professor Josephine Hegarty, Head of School Nursing and Midwifery; and Dr Siobhan O'Halloran, Chief Nursing Officer, Department of Health; pictured at the gallery opening and book launch evening in the Jennings Gallery.

The School of Nursing and Midwifery is celebrating a rich 25 year history. Though Schools of Nursing and Midwifery exert considerable influence on their communities, the specific dimensions of their economic and social impact are rarely appreciated. Just under 5,000 nurses and midwives have qualified from the School of Nursing and Midwifery over its 25 years history and over two thousand nurses and midwives having developed advanced knowledge and skills. Over the last 25 years the School has attained over 6.5 million euro in research funding; helped generate new knowledge which has been disseminated in over 1,500 research publications; graduated more than 50 doctoral students; and impacted national health and social care policy.

The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 endorses the civic mission of higher education and states that 'engaging with wider society' is 'one of the three interconnected core roles of higher education'. The School of Nursing and Midwifery is at the cutting edge of such impact.

To help illustrate the history of the school and the wider evolution of healthcare in the Cork region, the School of Nursing and Midwifery has opened an exhibition in the Jennings Gallery, Brookfield Health Sciences Complex, which showcases images and artefacts from the School's past. The exhibition will run until January 31st, 2020. The School has also published a book documenting its past 25 years. A PDF copy is available **HERE**.



Pictured right (l-r): Mr Philip Scott, patron of the Aphasía Café; Clinical Therapies Society Committee Members, Shauna Bell, Imogen Lyons, Andrea Horgan; and Dr Helen Kelly, Department of Speech & Hearing Sciences.



UCC Aphasía Café Digital Badge Launched

Dr Helen Kelly and the UCC Clinical Therapies Society are delighted to launch the UCC Aphasía Café Digital Badge. This digital badge provides a unique opportunity for UCC healthcare students to have a positive societal impact on Cork community, while gaining invaluable experience in supporting adults with aphasia following stroke or head injury.

Aphasia impacts a person's ability to understand and express themselves in spoken and written modalities, resulting in limited opportunities to engage and participate in society. For this reason, the Clinical Therapies Society, supported by Dr Helen Kelly (Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences), set up the monthly Aphasía Café, which is situated within a café open to the general public in Cork City. The purpose of the café is to support people with aphasia to participate in activities of daily living, specifically, eating, drinking and socialising with other people with aphasia, in a local café. This reduces potential isolation and creates an

overall sense of community. Completion of this digital badge will equip students in engaging with people with aphasia and contribute to the development and sustainability of the Aphasía Café.

Students will:

- gain confidence in supporting adults with acquired communication disorders, such as aphasia,
- create materials suitable to support people with aphasia, for example, adapted café menus, café staff training material,
- develop skills in providing an environment where people with communication disorders, such as aphasia, can interact in a natural setting,
- make a positive contribution to people with communication difficulties in the local community, and,
- have the opportunity to be involved with university life and outreach activities.

For further information please contact Dr Helen Kelly at **helen.kelly@ucc.ie**

College proud of its recipients of the 2019 University Staff Recognition Awards

In October several staff across the College of Medicine and Health were honoured in the 2019 University Staff Recognition Awards across both the Teaching Excellence Awards and the Research Awards categories.

The Teaching Excellence Awards recognise the outstanding efforts of teaching staff to ensure that UCC students receive the highest quality learning and teaching experience. Honoured as part of these awards were Dr Eithne Hunt (Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy), Maeve Minihane and Paul Geeleher (UCC Plus+), Shane Horan (UCC Career Services/UCC Works Award) and Eleanor Donoghue (UCC Graduate Attributes Programme Manager and formerly UCC Career Services) were awarded a President's Team Award for Excellence in Teaching 2018/2019 for the innovative and cohesive development and implementation of a pedagogy - service-learning - that helps first-year Occupational Therapy students to develop values, skills and aptitudes

that promote civic participation, social inclusion, and employability and other attributes essential to thrive in learning and life within and beyond UCC.

Another President's Team Award for Excellence in Teaching was awarded to the School of Pharmacy (led by Dr Suzanne McCarthy), who implemented a multi-disciplinary research-led teaching initiative in 2018 entitled "*Bridging the Innovation Gap - Fostering entrepreneurship in undergraduate pharmacy students through serious play*" with members of CUBS (Dr Gillian Barrett and Dr Andrew Pope) and the Blackstone LaunchPad (Mr. Peter Finnegan). The initiative uses pedagogical theory and practice to support and aid students' development in entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial mindsets, to broaden their horizons and to make them world-ready and work-ready. It also equips students with the tools and skills to solve real world problems, the initiative promotes creativity, innovation and higher order thinking skills.



1. Occupational Therapies Staff Awards - Pictured (l-r): Dr Eithne Hunt, lecturer in Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy; Eleanor Donoghue, UCC Graduate Attributes Programme Manager; President Patrick O'Shea; Ms Maeve Minihane, Schools Outreach Co-ordinator UCC+; Mr Shane Horan, Co-ordinator UCC+.

2. Pharmacy Staff Awards - Pictured (l-r): Dr Suzanne McCarthy, lecturer in Clinical Pharmacy; Dr Gillian Barrett, lecturer in Cork University Business School UCC; President Patrick O'Shea; Mr Peter Finnegan, Director of Blackstone Launchpad UCC; Dr Andrew Pope, senior lecturer in Cork University Business School UCC. (Photos: Tomás Tyner)



The College was also successful in the category of Research Awards, which recognises those researchers who have made exceptional and very influential research contributions, push boundaries, enhance knowledge, and raise the national and international profile of University College Cork. Dr Darren Dahly of the School of Public Health was honoured with the award for Creating a Culture for Responsible Conduct of Research. This award recognises exceptional efforts made by researchers to foster a culture of responsible conduct of research at UCC and acknowledges Dr Dahly's efforts to promote open, reproducible research practices, particularly in the areas of FAIR data stewardship and statistical programming with R and RStudio. His activities in this area included numerous talks and workshops on these topics (including

a new postgrad module for 2020), and the continuing development of a FAIR data service for CoMH researchers. This work is supported by the HRB Clinical Research Facility - Cork, and done in collaboration with Dr Brendan Palmer (CRF-C) and the UCC Library.

Dr Gerard O'Keeffe of the Department of Anatomy and Neuroscience was also recognised, as he received the Research Supervisor of the Year Award. This award recognises, encourages and rewards those who have shown sustained excellence in the supervision and development of exceptional and influential researchers. This award is student-led, and Dr O'Keeffe was nominated by two students who felt that his guidance throughout their research was of exceptional quality.



3. Gerard O'Keeffe Staff Awards - Dr O'Keeffe receiving his award from President Patrick O'Shea.

4. Darren Dahly Staff Awards - Dr Dahly receiving his award from President Patrick O'Shea.

Photos: Tomás Tyner

Dr Dominic Hegarty crowned winner in the 'Best Educational Meeting' category at the Irish Healthcare Awards 2019



Pictured above (l-r): Mr Lloyd Mudiwa, Editor, Irish Medical Times; Dr Dominic Hegarty, Senior Clinical Lecturer, UCC; Dr Ciara Kelly, GP and Broadcaster with Newstalk.

Dr Dominic Hegarty, Senior Clinical Lecturer UCC, was voted the winner in the 'Best Educational Meeting' category at the Irish Healthcare Awards 2019 in Dublin.

Dr Hegarty received the award at a glitzy event in the Ballsbridge hotel in recognition of his role as Chair of the World Institute of Pain's 9th World Congress. The judging panel announced the prize at a ceremony with over 500 attendees, hosted by Irish Medical Times and presented by Dr Ciara Kelly, GP, presenter of Newstalk Live. The competition, now in its 18th year, is a highly prestigious event on the Irish healthcare calendar and recognizes those who contribute most in the Irish healthcare sector. Mr. Lloyd Mudiwa, Editor of the Irish Medical Times, praised the "high level of entries across all categories" and highlighted "the remarkable standard". He thanked the judging panel and praised the WIP World congress project saying individuals should be "extremely proud of the outstanding achievement".

The 9th WIP World congress was held in the convention center in Dublin in May 2018 where almost 2000 international delegates attended for the five-day event. On receiving the award Dr Hegarty complimented his colleagues on the WIP Committee saying that the prize is the "perfect reward for the hard work put in behind the scenes and for the industry sponsors who made the biggest international pain meeting in Ireland a reality". The conference had the highest attendance of international pain delegates ever hosted in Ireland with 21 different nations represented. The meeting contributed to over €4.5 million to the Irish economy and had the full support of Failte Ireland and the strong MedTech and pharma industry in Ireland.

Dr Hegarty is presently honorary treasurer WIP, and acts as a clinical lead in neuromodulation at Tyndall and ASSERT as well as running a busy clinical practice at Mater Private Hospital in Cork.



Pictured left (l-r):
Dr Aoife Feeley presented with the Fielding Medal for best final medical student project at the Royal College of Surgeons by Dr Niall Sheehy, Dean of the Faculty of Radiologists with Mr Kenneth Mealy, President of the RCSI.

UCC Alumnus Dr Aoife Feeley Awarded Fielding Medal for best final medical student project

UCC alumnus Dr Aoife Feeley was recently awarded the Fielding medal for best final medical student project. The medal, named in honour of Dr John Fielding and Dr Raymond Fielding, was awarded for Dr Feeley's research in the field of medicine and radiology. She investigated MRI for the assessment of acute appendicitis in 52 paediatric patients as a potential method of reducing the occurrence of negative laparotomy in this patient group. Compared with ultrasound, MRI had a significantly better sensitivity and specificity for acute appendicitis (92% and 84% compared with 25% and 93%,

respectively). The area under the curve for a five-sequence 12 minute free breathing MRI was 0.93 compared with 0.59 for ultrasound, which took 17 minutes to perform. MRI was equally well tolerated compared with ultrasound.

The paper was presented by Dr Feeley in September 2019 at the annual scientific meeting of the faculty of radiologists and has been submitted for paper publication. Dr Feeley was supervised by Dr OJ O'Connor and Professor Michael Maher, UCC. Dr Feeley studied medicine in UCC and graduated in the summer of 2019.



Dr Eve Griffin awarded HRB Emerging Investigator Award

Dr Eve Griffin of the School of Public Health was recently awarded a HRB Emerging Investigator Award. The funding from this award is to be used for a four year project, co-hosted by School of Public Health and National Suicide Research Foundation, titled "PRoviding Improved care for Self-harM: a mixed-methods study of intervention, economic and implementation outcomes from a national clinical programme".

The project will examine how routine management of self-harm in acute settings impacts on patient outcomes, with regards repeat self-harm, suicide and premature mortality. It will evaluate if the introduction of a national clinical programme for self-harm in Irish hospitals has led to improved outcomes for individuals as well as cost savings. The project will also identify the barriers and facilitators to implementing services in Ireland, in order to inform and optimise service delivery.



Intinn: Mental Wellbeing Programme for Transition Year Students

In September 2019, Johnny Goodwin from the School of Nursing and Midwifery facilitated four workshops over two days as part of Cork Film Festival's new film and mental health outreach Intinn programme. Over 300 Transition Year students took part in the programme. Intinn, meaning 'mind' or 'mindfulness' opened with a screening of award-winning Irish Director Frank Berry's film, "I Used to Live Here", followed by a Q&A with the Director himself. Students then took part in a wellbeing and resilience building workshop, inspired by the film.

Feedback from both teachers and students was very positive; they said they learned important information about mental health from the film and the workshop. Students felt they were more aware about how to recognise signs of mental distress, and more confident about how to build resilience through use of practical exercises, such as deep breathing techniques.

These screenings and workshops served as a pilot project for Intinn. There will be a regional roll out of the programme in 2020.

Pictured above (l-r): Tanya O'Sullivan, Jigsaw; Sadie Cobbe, Cork Film Festival; Ellen Whelan, Cork Film Festival; Aoibhie McCarthy, Cork Film Festival; Caoimhe Keogan, Jigsaw; Geraldine Gannon, Jigsaw; Johnny Goodwin, School of Nursing and Midwifery, UCC.



College of Medicine and Health Doctoral Travel Bursaries: Applications now open

The Graduate School in the College of Medicine and Health is inviting applications for up to 10 awards of Travel Bursaries for students currently registered for a doctoral degree (PhD/ MD/ Doctorate) in the College of Medicine and Health.

The purpose of these awards is twofold:

- To facilitate students who wish to present their work at an international conference.
- To facilitate the training of students who wish to acquire skills that are essential for their academic development, but which they cannot otherwise receive in UCC.

Applicants can apply for up to €1,000 in financial support that may be used towards the cost of travel, accommodation and registration fees for international conferences or relevant training courses that are due to take place between 1st October 2019 and 30th September 2020.

Application guidelines, selection criteria and the application form can be found at this link: www.ucc.ie/en/med-health/gradstudies/doctraltheltravelbursaries/

The closing date for receipt of completed application forms is **Friday, 14th February 2020**

UCC Alumnus Dr Donal Collins leads team to win System Leadership Initiative of the Year at the Health Service Journal Awards 2019



Pictured above (l-r): Dr Donal Collins GP Clinical Lead, New Care Models Lead for Fareham and Gosport CCG (second from right) and team receiving their award at the HSJ Awards 2019.

UCC Medicine Alumnus Dr Donal Collins' integrator team won the System Leadership Initiative Award at the Health Service Journal Awards 2019. The team, comprised of talent from NEL Commissioning Support Unit, OptiMedis Cobic, Imperial College Health Partners (ICHP), and PPL and Social Finance, received the award in recognition of their Hampshire System Integrator initiative. This initiative demonstrated how a system integrator could deliver improved proactive and preventive care, benefitting individual patients, population health and the public purse.

After analysing what the greatest opportunities were for improvement in Fareham and Gosport population and where to focus, a shared contract was created between GPs, acute and community providers which aligned incentives to enable better management of patients with or at risk of type 2 diabetes.

It involved identifying particular cohorts of patients, using data to give GPs insights into practice, and support for GPs and commissioners to roll out best practice. Patients were involved in pinpointing what was important to them. It resulted in a system integrator handbook to support future population health projects.

Of the project, Dr Collins said, "This was all about trying to deliver the quadruple aim—improving quality, improving population health, increasing value, all while improving staff satisfaction. We endeavoured to deliver this across a system that was working in silos, not thinking about whole population health but just about each organisation and the impact that the population had on the organisation."

Dr Collins graduated from UCC with the class of 1989. The College would like to congratulate him on this prestigious achievement.

More details on the project can be found [HERE](#).



Professor Roisin Connolly, newly-appointed Professor Gerald O'Sullivan Chair in Cancer Research UCC

What do you feel is the most promising aspect of the research you're doing at the moment?

One promising aspect of my research right now is identifying what we call predictive biomarkers of response to treatment in patients with early stage HER2-positive breast cancer. What this means is trying to tailor the specific treatment that the patient will receive through analysis of their tumor biopsies, blood tests, or imaging. For example, earlier this year I published a paper in the Journal of Clinical Oncology which identified an imaging biomarker of response to HER2 directed therapy in patients with early-stage breast cancer. Changes in standardized uptake values (SUV) on a PET scan, after only 2 weeks of treatment, could predict who was likely to respond to treatment. Ultimately what we hope to achieve is to identify a cohort of women who may not need chemotherapy at all in the management of their breast cancer, and instead may receive HER2-directed therapy alone which doesn't have chemo side effects. At the same time, we know that others will need a very aggressive approach. We're trying to divide patients into these groups - those who may require less treatment (which is sometimes called de-escalation of treatment), versus those who do need a more aggressive approach, and maybe even more than what we currently offer them. Right now what I'm focusing on with my collaborators in the United States is to use the blood samples and the tissue biopsies from those patients to identify further who benefits from which approach.

Are approaches to breast cancer treatment which don't involve chemotherapy becoming more common in the field?

Yes they are. In the past, the majority of women with breast cancer were treated with chemotherapy. More and more we are realizing that treatment for breast cancer

can be tailored to the individual. We can now avoid chemotherapy in many cases using gene expression profiling, and thus use targeted therapy for certain groups of patients which may be more effective than using chemotherapy. For example, two of the main targets in breast cancer are the estrogen receptor (ER) and the HER2 receptor, so more and more we're using treatments targeted towards those receptors rather than chemotherapy which is more of a "shot in the dark" treatment.

You're the Study Chair for the international phase III ECOG-ACRIN study investigating the epigenetic agent entinostat in combination with hormonal therapy in patients with metastatic breast cancer. Could you comment a little on how that study is progressing?

The study is called E2112 and has enrolled patients with metastatic breast cancer whose tumours express this ER target. We are trying to see if we target the ER with hormone therapy and add a new pill called entinostat, which is an epigenetic agent, whether we can overcome resistance to the hormone therapy. If we could do that, and women can be on that treatment for longer, we might be able to delay the onset of the need for chemotherapy. The study accrued 600 patients with the final patient enrolled over a year ago, so we're waiting for the results now to see whether one approach is better than the other. If the study is positive, it is likely to be practice-changing.

As someone who has conducted research both in the US and Ireland, how would you contrast the research cultures of the two countries?

I think there are many similarities between the countries, especially when we consider the ultimate goal which is to advance science and improve outcomes for patients with cancer or at risk of developing same. An important part of my role here in Cork is to try and connect further the

researchers in the university with the clinic, such that we can be successful in that ultimate goal. As there are geographical distances between the university and the hospitals, I would like to create more opportunities for networking and collaboration. We need to learn from each other such that we can tackle the most important problems together and make them most relevant for improving outcomes for patients. This will facilitate "translational research", where ideas and results flow from the lab to the clinic and back.

You spoke at the Breaking Through: Research to Transform Cancer Treatment back in September. What was the focus of your presentation?

I presented an overview of the clinical trials I have developed and conducted over the last decade using epigenetic therapies, and what potential role these agents could have in breast cancer and other cancers. Epigenetic drugs are being used successfully in patients with hematologic malignancies, but not in solid tumors. Initially we investigated treating breast cancer with epigenetic treatments alone, and we realized that having the hormone on board was likely important, which was why we ultimately developed the large phase III trial including the hormone therapy.

Another interesting topic which I discussed on the day was whether these epigenetic agents can actually help the immune system become more successful in fighting cancers. This approach would involve combining epigenetic and immune therapies for those cancers which might not respond well to immune therapies. There are now multiple studies which are looking at immune therapy to try to help them to work better. The reason we studied epigenetics in combination with immune therapy was because we were working closely with our basic scientists in John Hopkins where we have world-renowned experts

in both fields, and it was clear that there may be potential to help patients with this approach.

Did you find the research on display on the day encouraging for the future of cancer research in Cork?

Yes, the conference really demonstrated the strength and range of research in Cork and the region. There were a number of areas of research which were very interesting. One area I found particularly engaging was survivorship, which essentially involves caring for patients after a cancer diagnosis. Hearing about the research being done in our School of Nursing around this to try to identify the real needs of patients and how we can best support them was really encouraging. Often our treatments involve pretty bad side effects. We try to minimize treatment where we can to avoid this, but if we are in a situation where a patient is having side effects, either from treatment they've already received or treatment that's ongoing, we want to be able to properly support them.

Another area of interest that was discussed at the conference was the role of the microbiome in oncology. For example, research is suggesting that the bacteria found in our gut may determine our risk of cancer, the time in our lives in which cancer is likely to develop, and how we are likely to respond to certain kinds of treatment. This is an area of intense research internationally, so it's great that we have this expertise here in Cork. We hope to work alongside APC in the future to develop further collaborations with cancer researchers.

We also heard from many other scientists from across the university and hospitals on the day, which sent a very clear message

that there is a lot of productivity in this space. Going forward I hope we can bring all of this together under one cancer research umbrella.

You were recently named the ECOG-ACRIN Young Investigator of the Year 2019. What advice would you give to an early-stage investigator?

The Young Investigator Award was based on many years of work with a clinical trials group to develop and implement the E2112 study. One of the main things I learned from that whole process was the value of strong mentorship. For this project I had very senior researchers from academic institutions across the US supporting me, and they taught me a lot about how things worked in terms of the regulatory side of clinical trials, interaction with industry and the value of team work and collaboration.

I also gained a better understanding of the importance of working with patient advocates, who were able to help me design the trial appropriately, help with accrual of the right number of patients over time, and utilizing media and communications to boost our pool of patients. Ultimately, for these types of large efforts a huge team is necessary, but it creates numerous opportunities in terms of grants, publications, getting to the next stage of the research, and more. I would strongly recommend getting involved with research groups to learn from experts in the field, and to make yourself available for new opportunities and collaborations that arise.

How important do you feel that an interdisciplinary approach is in the field of cancer research?

I think that an interdisciplinary research approach is essential for successful cancer research. People from different disciplines

working together and learning from each other, having opportunities to bounce ideas off each other, to network and discuss what's going on in their field - all of this is crucial. Studies that are designed both in the lab and the clinic are the ones most relevant and likely to have the most impact. All the different disciplines that are involved in cancer research and care have their own expertise to offer, and we will be more successful if we work together.

What role do you see machine learning and artificial intelligence playing in the future of your field?

Machine learning can assist us in the analysis of large amounts of data produced from clinical or lab-based trials, where you have vast quantities of information related to for example proteomics, genomics or the tumor microenvironment. Technology of this nature can help us decipher this data in order to help identify what's going on with the biology of cancer, or how we determine which patients may benefit from a certain approach.

Another use is looking for clues in standard tests that we use. Breast cancer screening, for example, involves the use of mammography in order to detect cancer early. International experts in machine learning and artificial intelligence are examining such images to identify additional clues as to who may or may not develop cancer in the future. This could lead us towards a scenario where we are able to prevent cancer in more women.

Speaking of Cork, what's been your favourite thing you've noticed about the city since you've moved here?

My family and I like to have new adventures, so we're excited to explore the history and culture of the city. What's

most exciting is the chance to explore the surrounds of the city too - West Cork is exceptionally beautiful. Plenty of opportunities for hiking and camping, as long as the rain stays away!

It can be tough to do those kinds of outdoor activities at this time of year when the weather has taken a bad turn - what do you do in your spare time when you can't get out

When the weather is bad we enjoy family movie nights, and our kids really enjoy board games. We recently found ourselves in the Tabletop board game café in the city. They do supervised sessions for kids too, which is great. Although they have such a vast quantity of games that we were pretty overwhelmed with choice!

“All the different disciplines that are involved in cancer research and care have their own expertise to offer, and we will be more successful if we work together.”



Students, friends and family celebrate Undergraduate Quercus College Scholarships

The College of Medicine and Health hosted the Undergraduate Quercus College Scholarships in Brookfield University College Cork early December which acknowledges the academic achievement in a public way of students who achieved a First Class result in their subject. This was a cause for acknowledgement and for great celebration for the students, friends and family. Students from as far away as Ontario, Singapore and Vancouver were present demonstrating the International reach of the College of Medicine and Health, UCC. Deputy President and Registrar Professor John O'Halloran provided the keynote address and Professor Stephen Byrne also gave an insightful and inspiring speech.



About Quercus College Scholarships for College of Medicine and Health

In the College of Medicine & Health, Quercus College Scholarships of €1,000 each, tenable for one year, are offered for competition, based on the results of each of the Summer First, Second, Third and, where applicable, Fourth year University Examinations in programmes offered by the College of Medicine & Health.

- Value: €1,000
- You must be a current UCC Student to be eligible for this scholarship



1. Dental (l-r): Professor John O'Halloran (Deputy President and Registrar, UCC), Yenn Ruong Lim (Dentistry), Cecily Wang (Graduate Entry Dentistry), Dr Mairead Harding (Dental School & Hospital), Carlee Rose Held (Graduate Entry Dentistry) and Naoise Ni Chodlatain Lachtna (Dentistry).

2. Nursing (Midwifery) (l-r): Agnes Phelan (Lecturer, School of Nursing & Midwifery), Annaleigh Margaret Walsh (Midwifery), Professor Josephine Hegarty (Head of School of Nursing & Midwifery), Giulia Marinelli (Midwifery), Professor John O'Halloran (Deputy President and Registrar, UCC), Sarah Louise O'Connor (Midwifery), Dr Rhona O'Connell (Lecturer, School of Nursing & Midwifery), Dr Geri McLoughlin.

3. Clinical Therapies (Occ.) (l-r): Professor Nicole Müller (Head of School of Clinical Therapies), Gabrielle O'Donovan (Occupational Therapy), Alison Skipp Prendergast (Occupational Therapy), Ciara Janet Fitzell (Occupational Therapy), Professor John O'Halloran (Deputy President and Registrar, UCC).



4. Public Health (l-r): Professor Ivan Perry (Head of School of Public Health), Kerrie Louise Gallagher (Public Health), Amy Patricia Griffin (Public Health), Ellen Murphy (Public Health), Professor John O'Halloran (Deputy President and Registrar, UCC).

5. Clinical Therapies (Speech) (l-r): Professor Nicole Müller (Head of School of Clinical Therapies), Amy O'Donovan (Speech & Language Therapy), Eimear Ryan (Speech & Language Therapy), Sarah Duxbury (Speech & Language Therapy), Professor John O'Halloran (Deputy President and Registrar, UCC).

6. Nursing (Gen.) (l-r): Professor Josephine Hegarty (Head of School of Nursing & Midwifery), Susan Lavelle (General Nursing), Aoife McCarthy (General Nursing), Taylor Kruschel (General Nursing), Professor John O'Halloran (Deputy President and Registrar, UCC), Dr Teresa Wills (Lecturer, School of Nursing & Midwifery).

7. Nursing (Various Courses) (l-r): Dr Teresa Wills (Lecturer, School of Nursing & Midwifery), Professor Josephine Hegarty (Head of School of Nursing & Midwifery), Marieke Buckley (Children's & General Nursing), Jessica Dempsey (Children's & General Nursing), Belinda Mbongo Luma (Intellectual Disability Nursing), Zara McCarthy (Intellectual Disability Nursing), Koteswar Kareti (Intellectual Disability Nursing), Ciara Hassett (Mental Health Nursing), Professor John O'Halloran (Deputy President and Registrar, UCC), Margaret Monahan (Mental Health Nursing).

8. Medicine (l-r): Louise Howe (Medicine), Curtis Fahey (Graduate entry Medicine), Professor John Cryan (Chair of Department of Anatomy & Neuroscience), Benedict Blake (Medicine), Ellen Atkinson (Medicine), Professor John O'Halloran (Deputy President and Registrar, UCC), Seán Ó Murchú (Medical and Health Sciences), Dylan O'Donovan (Graduate Entry Medicine), Hannah Keohane (Medicine).

9. Pharmacy (l-r): Professor Stephen Byrne (Head of School of Pharmacy and Dean of Undergraduate Studies, UCC), Ciara Kenny (Pharmacy), Emma Leahy (Pharmacy), Professor John O'Halloran (Deputy President and Registrar, UCC).

Photos: Donagh Glavin

TiNY Health publishes new children's book to explain the rationale behind the needle

TiNY Health was founded by a paediatric nurse and doctor team in 2016. Their goal is to change how children are communicated with within a healthcare setting. They are doing this through the creation of highly engaging, educational resources for health care professionals, parents and children. TiNY Health's founders are UCC Paediatric and General nursing graduate, Gail Condon and paediatric SpR Dr Mick Carter, who is a UCD graduate.

The autonomy of children in health care decisions was the focus of TiNY Health from the outset. Every day, well and unwell children undergo tests, treatments and procedures that they do not fully understand. They may not be able to consent; that does not mean however that they do not need to be informed. TiNY Health wants to change how children are communicated with regarding healthcare decisions both inside and outside of the healthcare setting. TiNY Health does this through the creation of highly effective and engaging content that is child centric. Gail and Mick believe that encouraging children to be involved in making decisions regarding their health is imperative. Children need to

be informed in an age appropriate manner to allow them to be involved in decisions affecting their health.

An example of children undergoing a procedure often without prior understanding is when school age children receive vaccinations. TiNY Health has published a 24 page "It's Vaccine Day!" booklet and workbook, animation and online game in English, French and Spanish. Its aim is to mentally prepare the child for their vaccination by explaining the rationale behind the needle. After all, who wants an unexplained injection?

The story opens with how vaccines were discovered by Edward Jenner. This is followed by the science of the immune system and how vaccines work with the immune system to protect the body against pathogens. Following this we see the reality of what happens on vaccine day. Attached to the booklet is a four page workbook. This is to encourage engagement and to cement the child's understanding of what they have read. The overall focus is to alleviate anxiety and to build a positive, trusting relationship with medical practitioners from an early age. The

vaccine booklet was written and illustrated by Gail and Mick, and was sponsored by an educational grant from Sanofi Pasteur.

TiNY Health hopes that this project will not only help children, but their parents too. The founders of TiNY Health believe that it is time to respect the child, their intelligence and their autonomy.

To see more on the vaccine project and other projects please visit <https://tinyhealth.info/>





School of Nursing and Midwifery runs health equity masterclass

The School of Nursing and Midwifery hosted a post-conference masterclass on health equity on Friday 29th November. Titled “Perspectives on Health Equity for Nursing and Midwifery”, the masterclass was facilitated by Professor Judith Lynam, of the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada. The School of Nursing in UBC is home to CRIHHI (Critical Research in Health and Health Inequity) research centre.

Aimed at nursing and midwifery practitioners, leaders, educators, researchers and graduate students, the masterclass provided an opportunity to examine the different ways that perspectives on health equity can be taken up within nursing and midwifery practice with patients and families. As an expert in this field, with decades of experience in exploring this area with practitioners and families in Vancouver, Professor Lynam drew upon her research and participants’ examples to explore the health impacts of social exclusion and marginalisation.

Participants were able to draw on their own experiences in Cork, Kerry, and as far afield as Sweden, to illustrate how these issues manifest in day to day clinical nursing and midwifery practices. Potential strategies to address the issues relating to inequities and diversity were explored. Participants particularly benefited from hearing about the opportunities which participatory research methods and University-Practice partnerships offer for improving the delivery of healthcare services and health outcomes.

Following the success of the masterclass, the group have begun to discuss establishing a ‘Social Justice Interest Group’ within the School and are considering ways to liaise with appropriate clusters within the ISS21. If interested in learning more please contact Dr Angela Flynn at angela.flynn@ucc.ie

Pictured above (l-r): Professor Angela Flynn, School of Nursing and Midwifery UCC and Professor Judith Lynam, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.



First Diplomas in Paramedical Science presented

The College of Medicine and Health has announced that the first award of the Diploma in Paramedical Science to newly qualified National Ambulance Service (NAS) Paramedics at UCC has taken place.

The Diploma represents the culmination of two years’ study and training with the Ambulance Service and UCC. The 41 successful candidates will now be employed as full time paramedics in the National Ambulance Service.

The program is currently led by Professor Stephen Cusack. Professor Cusack commented:

“We are delighted to be in partnership with the NAS in this new phase of Paramedic education.”

“This represents a significant step in UCC’s involvement in professional paramedic development and our provision of future courses national and internationally.”

“It is envisaged that in the near term UCC will launch programs in Advanced Paramedic practice, Community Paramedicine and Critical Care Paramedicine in support of the ambitions for healthcare evolution of our partners in the NAS and HSE.”

For more information, click **HERE**.

Pictured above (l-r): Dr Adrian Murphy; Martin Dunne, Head of the Ambulance Services; Helen Whelton, Head of the College of Medicine and Health; Professor Stephen Cusack, Specialty Expert Emergency Medicine; and Paula O’Leary, Head of School of Medicine.

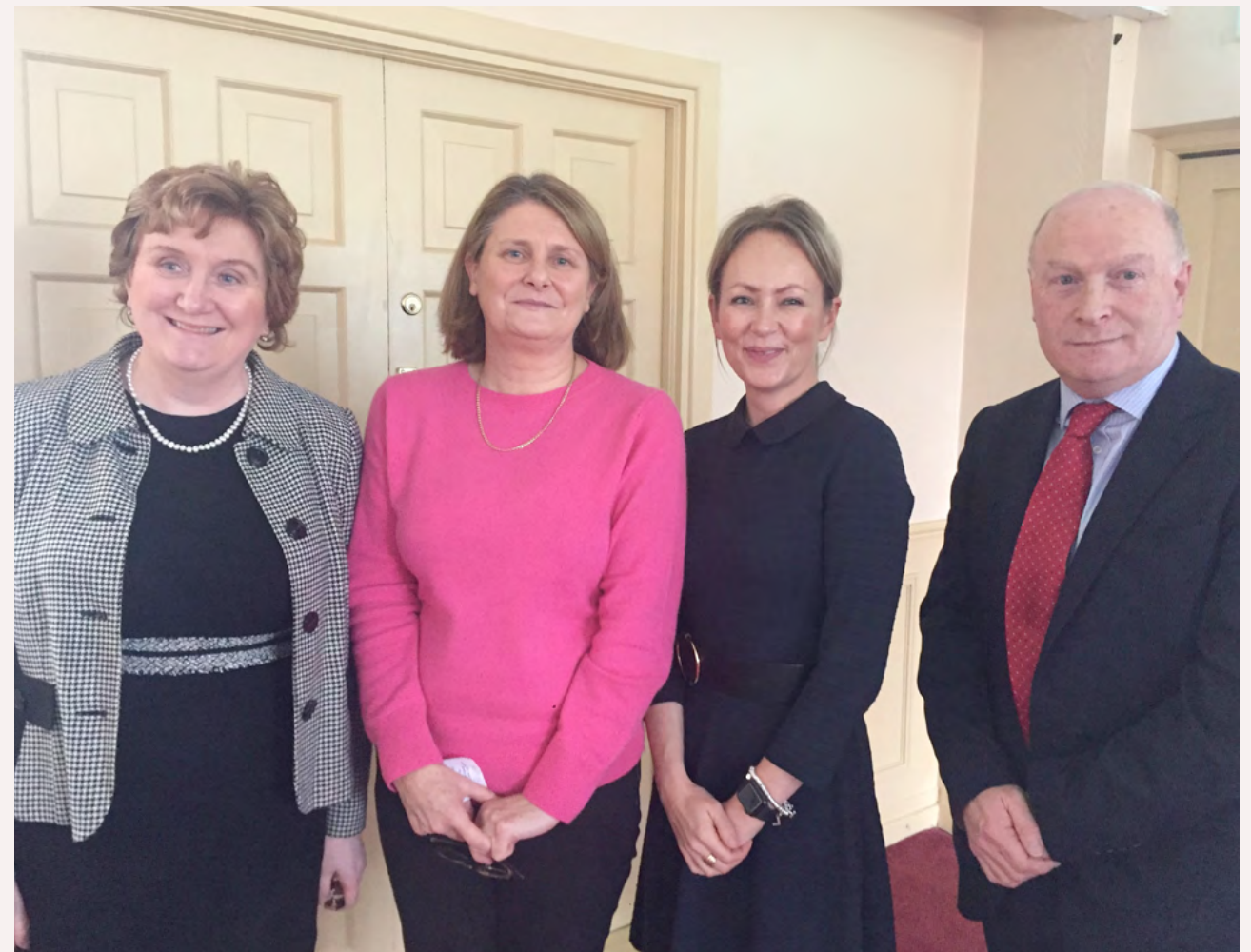
Fluoride and Caring for Children's Teeth (FACCT) Study presented at the Society of Chief and Principal Dental Surgeons

Dr Máiréad Harding (Oral Health Services Research Centre, Cork University Dental School and Hospital) and Jodi Cronin (c) were delighted to be invited to present results from the Fluoride and Caring for Children's Teeth (FACCT) Study at the recent meeting of the Society of Chief and Principal Dental Surgeons of Ireland held in the Bloomfield Hotel Mullingar. The study was a collaborative research project between the Oral Health Services Research Centre, UCC and the Health Service Executive (HSE) Dental Services, and was funded by the Health Research Board (award number CARG/HRB 2012/34).

The FACCT study was designed to investigate the impact and the outcome of the downward change in community water fluoridation policy (2007) on dental caries and dental fluorosis (a cause of white marks on front teeth) in Irish children, while also considering

the change in policy on the use of fluoride toothpastes (2002) and to conduct a full economic evaluation of community water fluoridation. Data were presented for the 8-year-old children who participated in Dublin, Cork and Kerry and demonstrated that the children with community water fluoridation had less tooth decay than children without water fluoridation, controlling for socio-demographic factors, toothbrushing habits and dental visiting, which could all influence the result. The study also demonstrated no change in the level of white marks on the front teeth associated with community water fluoridation. The economic evaluation that was carried out demonstrated the net benefits of providing community water fluoridation.

Further information on the FACCT study can be found **HERE**.



Pictured above (l-r): Dr Marie Tuohy, Secretary Society of Chief and Principal Dental Surgeons of Ireland; Dr Mairead Harding, Oral Health Services Research Centre, Cork University Dental School and Hospital; Ms Jodi Cronin, Oral Health Services Research Centre, Cork University Dental School and Hospital; Dr Joe Green, Society of Chief and Principal Dental Surgeons of Ireland.



Pictured above (l-r): Ms Mary Manning, National Dementia Office; Dr Suzanne Timmons, Clinical Lead for Dementia for the Republic of Ireland and senior lecturer, Centre for Gerontology and Rehabilitation UCC, Minister for Health Mr Simon Harris TD; Dr Stephen Byrne, Head of School of Pharmacy UCC, Dr Philip Crowley, HSE National Quality Improvement Team.

New National Clinical Guideline on appropriate prescribing of psychotropic medication for non-cognitive symptoms in people with dementia launched

On 5th December, 2019, Minister for Health Simon Harris TD launched a new National Clinical Guideline on the appropriate prescribing of psychotropic medication for non-cognitive symptoms in people with dementia. The guideline was developed by a national multidisciplinary group co-chaired by Dr Suzanne Timmons in the Centre for Gerontology and Rehabilitation, School of Medicine (in her role as Clinical Lead for the HSE National Dementia Office) and Professor Stephen Byrne, School of Pharmacy.

The guideline is available on the Department of Health [website](#).

UCC PhD student Marinara Marcato featured in TG4 Documentary ‘Saol an Mhadra Bháin’ for her research on developing guide dog training programs through technology

PhD researcher at Tyndall National Institute Marinara Marcato is working closely with Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind to further develop their dog training program through technology. This research will gather data and give a more insight to canine wellbeing therefore allowing trainers to identify early on what are the characteristics of a good guide dog. This research is the first of its kind in the world.

Marinara was recently featured in ‘Saol an Mhadra Bháin’ (‘The Secret World of Working Dogs’), a two part bilingual documentary that blends science with human interest to realise the capabilities of these dogs and learn about the special relationship between dog and owner, and how that bond enhances and empowers the lives of people with disabilities and life-debilitating illnesses. The documentary tells the stories of people whose lives are dramatically changed and improved by their newly

established partnerships with their working dog. It also shows how extraordinary abilities of these working dogs are helping doctors and scientists to find breakthrough medical solutions to worldwide health problems.

Speaking in the documentary, Marinara explained her research, stating: “We are looking at ways of identifying emotions in dogs because that can tell us how the dog reacts to different stimuli, and then based on their reactions we can understand how suitable that dog is for guiding work.”

The documentary is available to watch now via RTÉ Player.





Dental students volunteer at Men's Health Day

Pictured above (l-r): Grainne Marie Ryan, Nicholas Tan, Emily O'Sullivan and Madison Dobrovolskis.

Four UCC Dentistry students volunteered at a Men's Health Day organised by Cork South Community Work Department in Ballyphehane Community Centre in Tory Top Hill on October 22nd 2019 in collaboration with the Men's Sheds. The day was very well attended and the Oral Health Stand was particularly busy; the organizers were delighted with the interaction between students and participants. The student volunteers, Grainne Marie Ryan, Madison Dobrovolskis, Emily O Sullivan and Nicholas Tan found the experience beneficial and provided the following feedback:

"All in all we found participating in Men's Sheds to be a beneficial, educational and rewarding experience. It gave us a greater insight into what men of that age want from their dentist, their level of understanding regarding oral care and the importance of smoking cessation. We were able to provide people with advice, reassurance and referrals where necessary. Collectively we found it a very fulfilling experience and would hope to participate in similar events again in the future".

Many thanks to the students for taking the time to engage with this event and to the staff who facilitated it.

School of Public Health and National Suicide Research Foundation awarded €4M for the Mental Health Promotion and Intervention in Occupational Settings (MINDUP) study

Professor Ella Arensman, Dr Birgit Greiner, National Suicide Research Foundation, School of Public Health and colleagues were recently awarded funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 fund for the Mental Health Promotion and Intervention in Occupational Settings (MINDUP) study.

The project aims to improve mental health and wellbeing in the workplace by developing, implementing and evaluating a comprehensive, multilevel intervention targeting both clinical and non-clinical mental health issues. The project involves 15 countries and 17 project partners, including the National Suicide Research Foundation, European Alliance Against Depression; the Australian 'Mates in Construction' (a workplace intervention to reduce suicide in construction workers); Pintail, the World Health Organization and Institution of Occupational Safety & Health (IOSH). The project has a total funding allocation of €4 million. Of all 141 submissions, the MINDUP project received the highest ranking.

The kick off meeting with all partners involved in the MINDUP project will be held in UCC on Thursday 9th and Friday 10th January 2020.

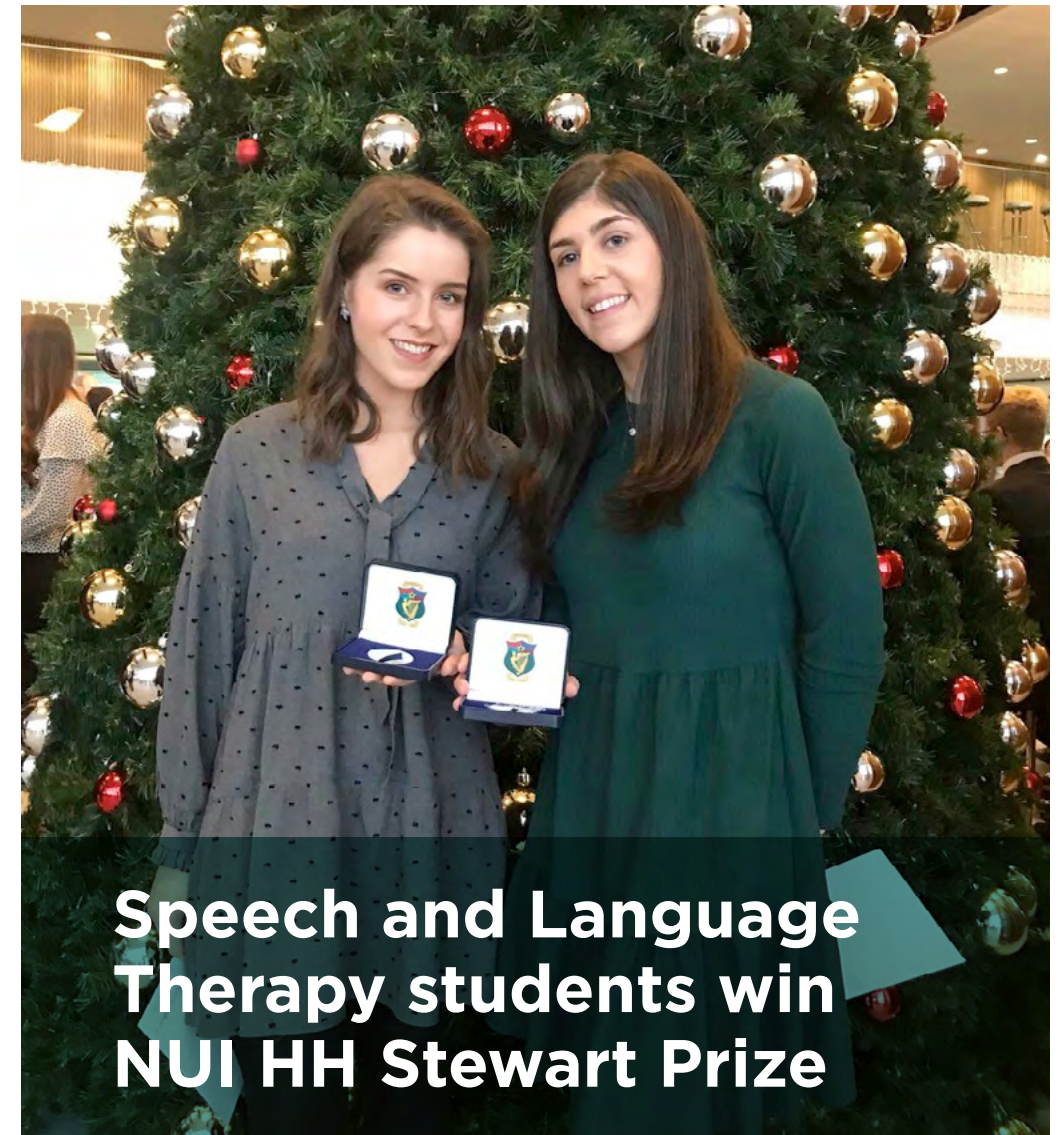


Above (l-r): Darek Sokol-Randall, Graduate Entry Medicine Student; Professor Moira O'Brien, Chairperson Irish Osteoporosis Society; Mario Rotundo, Graduate Entry Medicine Student.

UCC graduate-entry medical students awarded the Dr Moira O'Brien medal for top oral presentation at the Faculty of Sport and Exercise Medicine Annual Scientific Conference

UCC graduate-entry medical students Darek Sokol Randell and Mario Rotundo were awarded the Dr Moira O'Brien medal for the top oral presentation at the Faculty of Sport and Exercise Medicine Annual Scientific Conference at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland on September 14th 2019. Their oral presentation was based on their ongoing research, supervised by Dr Conor Deasy (CUH), which is focused on potential concussive events in GAA sports.

For a more complete story and to keep track of their progress, you can follow Darek and Mario on Twitter at [@DSokolRandell](#) and [@MPRotundo](#)



Speech and Language Therapy students win NUI HH Stewart Prize

Congratulations to Alanna Grealy and Áine Daly who won the NUI HH Stewart Prize in Speech and Language Therapy 2019, for their final year project 'Investigating the dysphagia knowledge of final year medical students'. This project was supervised by Dr Helen Kelly, Speech and Hearing Sciences. The award is part of the Dr Henry Hutchinson Stewart Literary and Medical Scholarships and Prizes, which are among the oldest awards to be offered for competition by the NUI, having been first established in 1888.

Pictured above (l-r): Áine Daly and Alanna Grealy.

Irish charity, industry and university sectors combine forces to improve cancer patient outcomes as €11.9m SFI research collaboration targets precision oncology

On the 26th of November the Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation, Heather Humphreys TD, announced an €11.9 million research collaboration in the field of precision oncology, which is supported by the Science Foundation Ireland Strategic Partnership Programme. The initiative is supported by a €5m Government investment through the Science Foundation Ireland Strategic Partnership Programme, matched by a €6.9m investment from the Charity and Industry partners making up the Precision Oncology Ireland Consortium - the first time that researchers, charities and industry have combined forces in this way.

Precision Oncology Ireland is a consortium of five Irish Universities, six Irish Cancer Research Charities, and ten companies aiming to develop new diagnostics and therapeutics for the personalised treatment of cancer. Precision (or 'personalised') medicine uses data about a person's genes (genomics), along with additional information on their cancer, to understand the unique pathways of a disease or treatment response in that person. With this new science, doctors can prescribe the right treatment in a timely fashion, saving the wasted resources and time our current 'trial and error' method incurs, while greatly improving response rates.

Speaking at the launch, the Director of Precision Oncology Ireland, Professor Walter Kolch said: "Precision Oncology Ireland is a vision come true.

It unites the top cancer research experts in Ireland, the leading cancer charities, and companies at the cutting edge of diagnostics and drug discovery. We believe that this unique consortium lays out the blueprint for how cancer research and cancer care will look in Ireland in the 21st century."

Welcoming the initiative, Professor Mark Ferguson, Director General, Science Foundation Ireland and Chief Scientific Adviser to the Government of Ireland, said: "SFI's Strategic Partnership Programme aims to foster partnerships across academia and industry to address key research questions and enhance the competitiveness of our economy. Ireland has unique and world-leading expertise in precision oncology. This transformative research programme will harness that expertise to enable real progress in personalised medicine for cancer patients, allowing us to take a leadership position in this important area of healthcare."

The Deputy Director of the programme, Professor William Gallagher, hopes that this programme will allow cancer patients to benefit from research advances at an earlier stage: "We believe that Precision Oncology Ireland will accelerate the development of new diagnostics and therapies for cancer, and allow these advances to reach cancer patients in Ireland earlier. We will also involve patients in this work from the beginning, to ensure that their voice is heard in determining the most relevant research priorities."



Pictured above (l-r): Eoghan O'Sullivan, Campaigns Manager, Breakthrough Cancer Research; Dr Mark Tangney, Principal Investigator, CancerResearch@UCC; Orla Dolan, Chief Executive, Breakthrough Cancer Research; Professor Roisin Connolly, Gerald O'Sullivan Chair of Cancer Research UCC; Dr Frances Drummond, Research Officer Breakthrough Cancer Research.

In Ireland, more than 40,000 people are diagnosed with cancer each year. Precision approaches to oncology give hope of improving cancer patients' response rates and survival, reducing side-effects from therapy, and shortening hospital stays, balancing out any increased cost to the healthcare system. The National Cancer Strategy (2017-2026) called for the introduction of precision diagnostics and therapeutics into frontline cancer care.

HRB-funded Frailty Care Bundle project to provide essential care to older patients



A project funded by the new HRB Partnership Awards will look at older people's care in acute hospital settings. The 'Frailty Care Bundle' will be a co-design endeavour, where older adults, nursing staff and a multidisciplinary team will create a bundle of essential care that promotes nutrition, early mobilisation and cognitive engagement for older patients during hospitalisation.

"The Frailty Care Bundle project will look at how to get patients back to their pre-admission functional capability so they can return home and their previous levels of independence", notes Darrin Morrissey.

According to Professor Corina Naughton, the Principal Investigator on this award, from the School of Nursing and Midwifery UCC, "Older people admitted to hospital are at high risk of functional and cognitive (memory) decline. This then has a negative impact on their ability to be discharged home. People living with frailty are at highest risk.

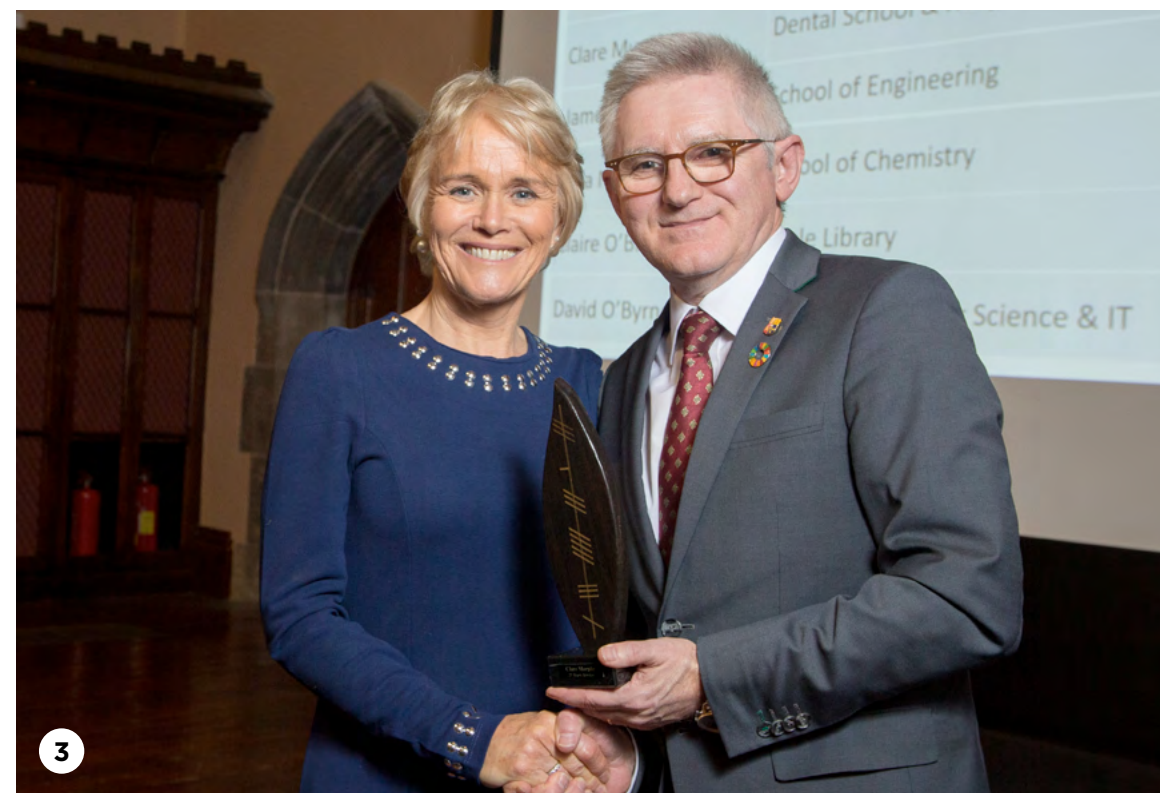
"This project sees older people and their families as partners and active participants in their recover, working with nursing staff and the wider multidisciplinary teams we want to create ward cultures that prioritise fundamental care.

"Maintaining mobility, increasing nutrition intake, especially protein and other micro-nutrients, helps build muscle strength and boost immunity, and are vital parts of the hospital care experience that are required to get people well and back in to their homes".

Professor Bridie O'Sullivan, Chief Director of Nursing/Midwifery, South/South West Hospital Group and Adjunct Clinical Professor with the School of Nursing and Midwifery, adds, "There is strong evidence that ward cultures that consistently deliver high standards in nutrition, mobilisation and patient cognitive engagement prevents decline and reduces risks of hospital adverse events".

"All of the partners in this project want to optimise care for their patients and prevent hospital associated decline in their health and wellbeing", says Dr Ruth Lernihan, Director of Nursing, South Infirmary Victorian Hospital.

The Applied Partnership Awards are designed to bring knowledge users and academic researchers together to develop research projects that address a specific and short-term need within the Irish health or social care system. More information on the awards can be found **HERE**.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LONG SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

The College of Medicine and Health is delighted to congratulate its recipients of the 2019 Long Service Awards, which honour staff members with either 25 or 35 years' service to UCC. Pictured with President Patrick O'Shea are:

1. **Anne O'Keeffe**, Dental School & Hospital
2. **Carol Horan**, Dental School & Hospital
3. **Clare Murphy**, Dental School & Hospital
4. **Eileen MacSweeney**, Oral Health Services Research Centre
5. **Jacquie Kelly**, School of Medicine
6. **Patrick Ryan**, General Practice Training Programme
7. **Therese Ruane-O'Hara**, School of Medicine

Photos: Tomás Tyner



Dr John Christopher Whelton, M.D., an appreciation

On Friday October 25th at 10:31 PM, Dr John Christopher Whelton died at Good Samaritan Hospital, West Palm Beach, Florida and with his passing, the world lost a beloved healer and gentle soul who bettered every person with whom he came into contact.

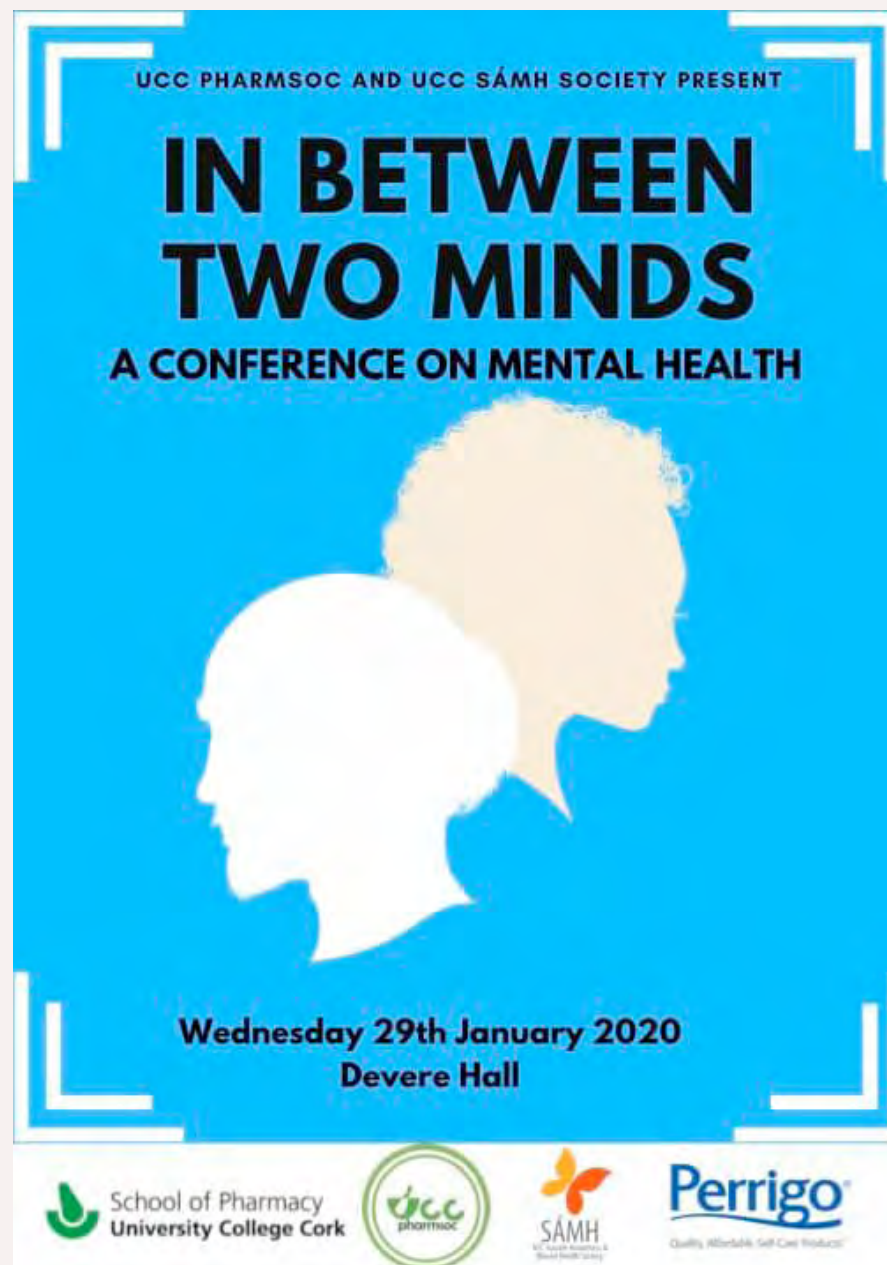
Dr Whelton was born on December 26, 1943 on Patrick's Hill in Cork, Ireland to Andrew and Helen Whelton. He attended the Christian Brothers school and earned his degree in Medicine from the University College in Cork. He completed his post graduate training in Internal Medicine and Rheumatology at the Johns Hopkins University Hospital and subsequently worked at the Oxford University Rheumatology research unit at Taplow.

Upon his return to the US, Dr Whelton served as a Major in the United States Armed Forces during the Vietnam War and was named Associate Chief of Rheumatology at the Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington, DC. After completing his military service, he moved to Palm Beach County in 1974 and proceeded to practice Rheumatology until his final days. He served as the Director of the Division of Medicine at the Good Samaritan Hospital, Chairman of the Florida State Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation, and President of the Rehabilitation Center for Children and Adults of the Palm Beaches. He received many honors including an Army Commendation Medal, the Mother Teresa Humanitarian Award, and he was twice named volunteer of the year for the Arthritis Foundation of the Palm Beaches.

He has actively supported his alma mater, Johns Hopkins, serving on their Rheumatology Advisory Board. He has established a fund at Johns Hopkins to support the training of future rheumatologists. He loved his family, friends, community, and his patients with all his heart and practiced up until the moment he was hospitalized. His family will remember him as an eternally devoted and loving husband, father and caretaker whose kindness left an indelible imprint on his children and grandchildren. His friends and his patients will remember him as an astoundingly brilliant mind whose keen intellect was surpassed only by his boundless generosity and compassion. He was an avid traveler with a voracious appetite for knowledge and a buoyant zeal for life, which manifested in all of his passions, be it world history, horticulture, or golf.

John is survived by Mahnaz, his beloved wife of 51 years, his son Sean and daughter in-law Amy of Bethesda, MD, his daughter Soraya and son in-law Peter Geisler Jr. of Lake Worth, Florida, his son Bijan Whelton of Palm Beach, Florida, his brother Michael and sister in-law Helen Whelton of Cork, Ireland, his brother Andrew and sister in-law Sharon Whelton of Cockeysville, MD, and his brother Paul and sister in-law Sheilagh Whelton of New Orleans, LA.

UCC PharmSoc and UCC Sámh Society present ‘In Between Two Minds’: A Conference on Mental Health, Wednesday 29th January 2020



University College Cork Pharmacy Society, SÁMH Society and School of Pharmacy are hosting a Mental Health Conference in 2020 titled “In Between Two Minds”.

The event will take place from 09:00 to 14:00 on Wednesday 29th January 2020 in Devere Hall in University College Cork. This event aims to present a multi-dimensional perspective of mental health, and the management of mental health conditions.

The conference is divided into two sessions: “Our Mental Health” features presentations about the mental health of Healthcare Professionals and Healthcare Students. The key-note speakers are Dr Yvonne Nolan and Dr Eithne Hunt, co-creators of “Older and Wiser”, a programme of science-based information and strategies to help children develop healthy brains and daily habits as they grow.

The second session is based on “Our Patients’ Mental Health” and will cover the pharmaceutical and medical aspects of mental healthcare conditions, and the role of healthcare professionals in their management.

Speakers at this conference offer valuable insights into this domain, and range from pharmacists, neuroscientists and occupational therapists to doctors, fitness gurus and motivational speakers.

The vision for this event is to unify current healthcare professionals and future professionals on a very omnipresent and important topic. Balancing self-care and patient-care can be challenging, and events like this are needed to highlight the issue and to increase awareness and education.

Please find the link to register below. Registration is closed on 13th January 2020. A full conference programme will be forwarded to those who register for this event.

Click **HERE** to register.

Contact:
Edel Burton and Ciara Kenny
Conference Directors
UCC Pharmacy Society 2019/2020
pharmacy@uccsocieties.ie