



EPINews

Department of Epidemiology and Public Health Newsletter

March 2016

WELCOME

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the 8th issue of EPINews. Since the last issue, the SPHeRE Network has held their Annual Meeting at the Royal College of Surgeons in Dublin and the Department was very well represented with 8 oral and 7 poster presentations. The theme of this year's meeting was '*Population health and health services research in Ireland: current trends and future directions*' and many of our staff and students were present to showcase their research in various areas ranging from emergency care to the management of obesity.

In February, one of our outstanding PhD students Martin Davoren graduated. Martin's thesis explored alcohol consumption among university students and has made several headlines both nationally and internationally. Congratulations Dr Davoren, we wish all the best for your future career!!

This issue is once again packed full with news, research updates, events and training opportunities and as always, I would encourage you to circulate EPINews among your colleagues and direct any queries or comments to me at emily.kelleher@ucc.ie

Ms. Emily Kelleher

DEPARTMENT NEWS

Welcome to new staff...

Since the last issue a number of new faces have joined the Department of Epidemiology and Public health working on various projects. We would like to welcome four new PhD Students Ms Kate O'Neill, Ms Ann Corneille Monahan, Ms Ermelinds Furdado da Luz and Dr Aisling Jennings. Welcome to Ms Karen Flynn who has joined the [UCC Health Matters Team](#), and also to Ms Lisa Delaney and Ms Nora Barret who have joined the Department as research assistants. Ms Maureen McDade has joined the team as the new UCC [SPHeRE](#) programme administrator while Mr. Barrie Tyner is the new [HRB Centre for Health and Diet Research](#) Blog editor. Finally we would also like to extend a warm welcome to three new post-doctoral researchers, Dr Leonard Browne, Dr Karen O'Leary and Ms Aimée Fox, who have joined the ICE-Project team to work on the statistical modelling of physical activity data, childhood obesity and health service use during pregnancy, respectively.

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CORE TEACHING PROGRAMMES

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SIREN

The Study of the Impact of Reconfiguration on Emergency and Urgent Care Networks ([SIREN](#)) is a four year programme of research funded by the Health Research Board. This mixed-methods study is investigating the development and performance of different emergency and urgent care systems (EUCS) in Ireland to produce a framework for the future evaluation of EUCS in this country. Led by [Prof John Browne](#) at the Department of Epidemiology & Public Health, there are 6 inter-related work packages: to identify geographical networks of emergency and urgent care in Ireland, and describe the model of EUCS configuration planned/implemented in each region; to analyse the process by which plans for EUCS reconfiguration were developed; to analyse the relationship between different models of governance and provision, and system-level indicators of activity, process and clinical outcome; to develop, implement and test a comprehensive evaluation framework for EUCS. A number of national and international collaborators are involved in the research including the School of Health and Related Research (SCHARR) at the University of Sheffield and National Directorate for Quality and Patient Safety in the HSE.



Members of the SIREN Team from L-R: Prof John Browne, Ms Brenda Lynch, Dr Conor Foley, Dr Tony Fitzgerald, Ms Claire Collins and Dr Elsa Droog

Diabetes Cycle of Care Roadshow

On February 6th, the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) hosted a [roadshow](#) on the new Cycle of Care for Diabetes in UCC. During the plenary sessions, Dr Eamon Shanahan provided an overview of the cycle of care, Prof. Colin Bradley (Department of General Practice, UCC) summarised current knowledge on therapeutics, and Practice Nurses Mary Tips and Kira O'Sullivan provided information on running diabetes clinics, and establishing patient registers and recall systems. The Diabetes Cycle of Care is an interim part of the GMS contract with GPs in Ireland.



Staff of the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health who presented at the recent SPHeRE Annual Conference held in the Royal College of Surgeons in Dublin

SPHeRE Network Annual Meeting 2016

The Department was well represented at this year's SPHeRE Network Annual Conference; 'Population health and health services research in Ireland: current trends and future directions'. The aim of the conference was to create a space for dialogue between all interested stakeholders in the field of Population and Health Services Research throughout Ireland and Northern Ireland and to showcase existing studies which will be of interest to Irish policymakers and practitioners. In the morning session, [Mr. Jamie Madden](#), [Dr Elsa Droog](#), [Prof John Browne](#), and [Ms Sharon Cadogan](#) were present to highlight their work in the areas of blood pressure variability, emergency care and primary care requesting patterns, respectively. That afternoon [Ms Sarah Fitzgerald](#) spoke of her research which focuses on the economic impact of obesity while [Ms Emily Kelleher](#) presented her research entitled the 'Barriers and facilitators associated with attendance at community-based programmes among families of overweight & obese children. Ms Gillian Maher also presented her work on protective lifestyle behaviours and depression. In addition to these oral presentations, numerous staff presented posters highlighting other research projects related to this field. Click [here](#) to view the full book of abstracts online.

ESPRiT

Evidence to Support the Prevention Implementation Translation (**ESPRiT**) is research being carried out by the ESPRiT team and based on a shared vision to reduce the preventable economic and societal burden of diabetes and to improve the quality of care for those living with the chronic condition. Diabetes is a common condition that can cause serious and potentially life-threatening complications. In Ireland, the prevalence of diagnosed diabetes among adults aged 18 years and over, increased from 2.2% in 1998 to 5.2% in 2015. Therefore, in 2015, approximately 1 in 20 adults have diagnosed diabetes ([Tracey et al., 2016](#)). The rising prevalence of diabetes has increased interest in the overall economic and societal costs of diabetes. This chronic condition places a significant burden of care on the individual, their family, health care professionals and the wider health system. It is now widely accepted that the traditional model of acute episodic care will not cope with the future burden of chronic conditions such as diabetes. As a result, greater attention has been paid to ways of reorganising diabetes services, including the reorientation of routine care towards the primary care setting.



Members of the EPIRiT team from L-R: Ms Julie Barrett, Ms Kate O'Neill, Dr Sheena McHugh, Prof Patricia Kearney, Ms Marsha Treacy, Ms Fiona O'Riordan, Ms Caragh Flannery

Professional Skills for Research Leaders

Over the course of seven months in 2015, [Dr Sheena McHugh](#) (Epidemiology & Public Health) and [Dr Carol Sinnott](#) (General Practice) completed a programme on [Professional Skills for Research Leaders](#) (PSRL). The PSRL programme is designed to enhance researchers' skills in the areas of leadership, management and engagement. The course consisted of 6 online modules accompanied by 6 face-to-face workshops. Each module was accompanied by an MCQ and personal portfolio. Topics included building a research team, funding, communication and time management. The workshops were facilitated by Human Resources, the Careers Office and guest speakers such as Prof. Anita Maguire and Prof. Paul Ross. One of the main benefits of the face-to-face workshops was the opportunity for inter-disciplinary learning and knowledge sharing. The course, which was also being delivered in Trinity College Dublin, was developed by Epigeum and endorsed by the Institute of Leadership & Management (ILM). Twenty researchers from across UCC took part in 2015 as a pilot programme and the course will be available again 2016.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

[Correlation between short-term blood pressure variability and left-ventricular mass index: a meta-analysis.](#) Madden JM, O'Flynn AM, Fitzgerald AP, Kearney PM. Hypert Res advance online publication 19 November 2015; doi:10.1038/hr.2015.126

[Epidemiology of diabetes and complications among adults in the Republic of Ireland 1998-2015: a systematic review and meta-analysis.](#) Tracey ML, Gilmartin M, O'Neill K, et al. BMC Public Health 2016;16(1):1-13.

[Gestational Age and Birth Weight and the Risk of Childhood Type 1 Diabetes: A Population-Based Cohort and Sibling Design Study.](#) Khashan AS, Kenny LC, Lundholm C, Kearney PM, Gong T, McNamee R, Almquist C. Diabetes Care. 2015 Dec;38(12):2308-15.

[Birth by Caesarean Section and the Risk of Adult Psychosis: A Population-Based Cohort Study.](#) O'Neill SM, Curran EA, Dalman C, Kenny LC, Kearney PM, Clarke G, Cryan JF, Dinan TG, Khashan AS. Schizophr Bull. 2015 Nov 27. pii: sbv152. [Epub ahead of print]

[Day care versus inpatient management of nausea and vomiting of pregnancy: cost utility analysis of a randomised controlled trial.](#) Murphy A, McCarthy FP, McElroy B, Khashan AS, Spillane N, Marchocki Z, Sarkar RK, Higgins JR. Eur J Obstet Gynecol Reprod Biol. 2016 Feb;197:78-82.

[Exploring potential mortality reductions in 9 European countries by improving diet and lifestyle: A modelling approach.](#) O'Flaherty M, Bandosz P, Critchley J, Capewell S, Guzman-Castillo M, Aspelund T, Bennett K, Kabir Z, Björck L, Bruthans J, Hotchkiss JW, Hughes J, Laatikainen T, Palmieri L, Zdrojewski T, on behalf of the Euroheart II. Int J Cardiology 2016;207: 286-291

Visit the department website for a full list of [publications](#)

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From l-r: Dr Janas Harrington, Dr Fiona Geaney, Prof Ivan Perry

employees' eating patterns and overall health to reduce their risk of obesity and other diet-related diseases (i.e. diabetes and heart disease). This sustainable programme creates a supportive healthy eating workplace environment for all employees with careful environmental engineering and nutrition education. A highly experienced team of research nutritionists and dieticians implement, monitor and evaluate the programme in each workplace. FCW has been piloted in a group consisting of major international and Irish corporates including EMC, Boston Scientific, Kerry Group and Alps Electric.

Congratulations to [Dr Martin Davoren](#) who recently submitted and defended this PhD thesis entitled "Alcohol Consumption and Related Harm among University Students in Ireland". Martins PhD aimed to provide the evidence base for policy and practice in relation to alcohol harm reduction among university students in Ireland. The thesis presents on the prevalence and associated harms alongside a series of chapters classifying drinkers into a range of typologies. Martin is funded as Post-doctoral researcher on the [REACT Project](#). This project aims to Reduce Excessive Alcohol Consumption in Third-level. Martin is also evaluating the impact of the Community Alcohol on Alcohol Project delivered by the Southern Region Drug and Alcohol Taskforce. Martin also works part time with the National Suicide Research Foundation with the SSIS-ACE team.

Graduations Galore...

Congratulations are in order for a number of our Department staff who graduated from various post-graduate courses in recent months. In November, [Dr Fiona Geaney](#) graduated after defending her PhD research which assessed the comparative effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of the Food Choice at Work (FCW) Programme. The programme demonstrated significant concrete and measurable improvements in employees' dietary intakes, nutrition knowledge and levels of overweight and obesity. It is now an exciting spinout company from the [HRB Centre for Health and Diet Research](#) that is centred on transforming the ability of employers to partner with their employees and catering provider to optimise employees' health. Led by Dr Geaney and [Prof Ivan Perry](#), the programme is designed to improve



From l-r: Dr Martin Davoren, Dr Frances Shiely

We are also delighted to share the news that our first Online Masters in Public Health (MPH) students graduated on Friday 26th February. The online MPH course provides individuals from a range of different professional backgrounds with academic and experiential development in the theory and practice of public health. Two graduates included Ms Fatia Kiyange and Ms Justina Hurley. Ms Kiyange is the Programme Director of the [African Palliative Care Association](#) (APCA). APCA is a Pan-African organisation ensuring that palliative care is widely understood, integrated into health systems at all levels and underpinned by evidence in order to reduce pain and suffering across Africa. She is an established author and co-author of several peer reviewed research papers on palliative care and she serves on several boards including the International Palliative Care Children's Network and the National Association of Social Workers in Uganda. During her MPH, Ms Hurley, looked at the relationship between Institutional Child Sexual Abuse and Post-traumatic Stress Disorder in adult survivors. Justina currently works in the [National Suicide Research Foundation](#) on the [National DBT](#)



From l-r: Ms Fatia Kiyange, Ms Colette Cunningham

[Project](#) which aims to train new dialectical behaviour therapy (a treatment developed for people with self-harm urges/ behaviours, suicidal thoughts, urges for suicide and/or suicide attempts) teams across the country.

Congratulations are also in order for our campus-based MPH class. Amongst those to receive their MPH were [Ms Claire Collins](#) and [Ms Laura McCarthy](#). Claire graduated after completing her thesis entitled "*The prevalence of physical inactivity and associated features among Irish students in third level education*". Claire now works in the Department as a research assistant on the [SIREN](#) study. Having completed the advance epidemiology pathway and submitting her thesis entitled "*Low Sodium Intake in Irish Adults*" Ms Laura McCarthy also received her MPH. Laura's study examined the reliability of using spot urine samples to assess salt intakes in analytical epidemiological studies. Laura is now working as a research assistant on a project examining the lifetime costs of childhood overweight and obesity in Ireland while also working as instructional designer for the Department. Congratulations also to Ms Fiona Barry who graduated with an MA in Teaching & Learning in Higher Education. Fiona has a background in nursing, midwifery, pediatrics and infection prevention and control and is currently a college lecturer in the Department teaching in the area of Health Protection.



From l-r: Ms Claire Collins, Ms Fiona Jagla



From l-r: Ms Aisling O'Sullivan, Ms Laura McCarthy

been sourced by students themselves and secured by our work placement co-ordinator. Students are encouraged to research opportunities that match their interest areas. For instance, this year one of our Gaelic footballers has secured a placement with the GAA Community & Health Team working in Croke Park. We have also developed links with high profile organisations abroad. Students go to the World Health Organisation in Copenhagen – [Ms Kate O'Neill](#), now doing her PhD in the Department, was one of our first students to complete an internship at the WHO in 2012. Work Placements are essentially about the student - their current needs and future aspirations. Most of our students stay in Ireland, many in Cork. They have plenty of opportunities to pursue their interest areas at home including research in the INFANT Centre; Health Promotion in HSE Departments and Community Organisations, as well as occupational health in the EHA or LAYA healthcare. The process of matching students to placements is individualised and we strive to get the best outcome for all – so far not too many 'disasters', and nothing that we haven't been able to resolve!

- Dr Fiona McLeod

BSc Public Health Work Placements...it's that time of year again!

Students on the [BSc in Public Health](#) complete a 12 week compulsory Work Placement in their 3rd Year. A hard ask? I think not - it is usually one of the things that students look forward to from day one! One of the reasons, they tell me, is that they can put what they learn in college into practice at last. Another reason might be the range of opportunities on offer - from the Cork based HSE Public Health Departments, to the Sydney School of Public Health in Australia. Since the first students ventured out on placement in 2007, we have worked hard to build up a database of employers offering a mutually satisfying workplace experience. Many of the Placements have



BSc Public Health students Aishling, Tracy, Sara and Lisa pictured at the WHO Regional Office for Europe in Copenhagen, Denmark

BSc Public Health - Theories and Practices of Health Promotion

In their second year of the [BSc in Public Health](#) students are introduced to the Theories and Practices of Health Promotion, co-ordinated by [Ms Mary Cronin](#), lecturer in the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health. This module aims to provide an introduction to the discipline of Health Promotion as an area of study and practice, including historical and contemporary contexts and theories, along with local and global perspectives. On successful completion of this module, students have a thorough understanding of the main developments in the discipline of Public Health which led to the emergence of Health Promotion in the 1980's and are able to identify the key theories, principles and values informing health promotion practice. As part of this module students visit community organisations to see health promotion learning put into practice. This year's class got the opportunity to visit the Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind (IGDB) National Headquarters and Training Centre on Model Farm Road in Cork. During their visit the class learned about the scope of work being carried out by the IGDB and the impact it has on population health. Students received a presentation from Ms Lean Kennedy, Access and Education Officer at IGDB, that was both educational and inspirational. They also got to meet some of the IGDBs furry residents and even got the opportunity to do some role-playing exercises with the team. We would like to extend our sincerest gratitude to the IGDB for accommodating such a large group and brightening up an otherwise dull November day!



MEET...

Ms Mary Cronin



Ms Mary Cronin

[Mary Cronin](#) is a college lecturer and has a multi-disciplinary background with an MA in Social Policy (UCC), a Diploma in Community and Youth Work (NUI Maynooth), as well as qualifying as a General Nurse (Cork Regional Hospital) and a Sick Children's Nurse (Guy's Hospital, London). Mary has worked in Ireland, England, Australia and Africa and her teaching and research are strongly informed by her education and work experiences. She teaches and co-ordinates modules on the [BSc in Public Health](#) and the [Masters in Public Health \(MPH\)](#); she also developed and co-ordinated a module on the department's first Online MPH in 2015. Her research interests are in population level determinants of health with particular reference to marginalised and ethnic minority communities, health inequalities, the role of public policies and community health promotion. Mary also has an interest in global health with a focus on sub-Saharan Africa; she has expertise in qualitative and participatory research methodologies. She received a post-graduate bursary from the Royal Irish Academy as initial funding towards her PhD research and she's returning to this in 2016 having taken a number of years' leave of absence while her children were young. Mary's PhD research involves a Foucauldian analysis of public health discourse since the 1800's and of Irish health promotion and public health policy documents from the 1980's to 2013.

Did you know? Mary worked on health initiatives in two war zones. She managed a vaccination programme in Liberia and a supplementary feeding programme in Somalia during periods of civil conflict in the 1990's. She has long-standing friendships since that time.

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 2016

[EPI/Lifestyle 2016 Scientific Sessions 2016](#),
1-4th March, Phoenix, US

[Analyzing Risk: Principles, Concepts, and Applications](#), 7-10th March, Boston, US

[23rd Intensive Course in Applied Epidemiology](#), 7th - 11th March, Aberdeen, UK

[The Sustainable Development Goals & the Implementation of the End TB Strategy](#), 9th March, RSTMH / London, UK

[Short Course: Health Protection Principles and Practice](#), 14-17th March, Bristol, UK

[Applied Epidemiology Scientific Conference](#), 22-23rd March, Warwick, UK

[ICOHS 2016: International Conference on Occupational Health and Safety](#), 24-25th March, Miami, US

[Short Course: Mastering Public Health Skills Courses](#), 29-31st March, London, England

April 2016

[International Society for Pharmacoepidemiology \(ISPE\)](#), 2015 Mid-Year Meeting, April 10-12th, Baltimore, US

[European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology](#), 11-13th April, Athens, Greece

[International Conference on Environmental and Occupational Health](#), 11-13th April, Putrajaya, Malaysia

[Short Course: Designing & Running Streamlined Randomized Trials](#), 11-13th April, Oxford, UK

[Short Course: Nutritional Epidemiology](#), 11-15th April, Utrecht, The Netherlands

[International Forum on Quality and Safety in healthcare](#), 12-14th April, Gothenberg, Sweden

[Online Certificate: Clinical Epidemiology](#), April 20th, Utrecht University, Online

[4th UK & IRL Exposure Science Conference](#), 20th April, Orlando, FL

May 2016

[HEI Annual Conference](#), 1-3rd May, Denver, US

[The XIII International Congress on Obesity \(ICO\)](#), 1-4th May, Vancouver, Canada

[Respiratory Health & Smoking Science Summit 2016](#), 24-26th May, London, England

June 2016

[European Obesity Summit](#), 1-4th June, Gothenburg, Sweden

[World Congress on Cardiology and Cardiovascular Health](#), 4-7th June, Mexico City, Mexico

[Summer School: Modern Methods in Biostatistics & Epidemiology](#), 5-18th June, Treviso, Italy

[Conference: Public Health 2016](#), 13-16th June, Toronto, Canada

[European Educational Programme in Epidemiology](#), 20th June-8th July, Florence, Italy

[14th Meeting of International Society for Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity \(ISBNPA\)](#), Advancing Behaviour Change Science, 8-11th June, Cape Town, South Africa

[9th International Scientific Conference on the Prevention of Work-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders](#), 20-23rd June, Toronto, Canada

[Epidemiology Congress of the Americas](#), 21-24th June, Miami, US

[Summer Course: Epidemiology / Columbia - EPIC](#), 1st June - 1st July, Online & New York City, New York, US

July 2016

[Summer School: Occupational Epidemiology](#), 4-15th July, Turin, Italy

[Short Course: Population and Public Health](#), 4-22nd July, London, UK

[10 Day Seminar on the Epidemiology and Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease](#), 24th-July - 5th August, California, US

August 2016

[32nd International Congress on Pharmacoepidemiology & Therapeutic Risk Management \(ICPE\)](#), 25-28 August, Dublin, Ireland

September 2016

[Society of Social Medicine Annual Meeting 2016](#), York

[Twenty-Eighth Conference of the International Society for Environmental Epidemiology](#), Old risks and new challenges for environmental epidemiology, 1-4th September, Rome, Italy

[UK Congress on Obesity \(UKCO\)](#), 9-11th September, Glasgow, Scotland

November 2016

[9th European Public Health Conference](#), 9-12th November, Vienna, Austria

Ongoing

[Stata courses](#)

[Stata training](#)

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