Dear Colleagues,

Since the last issue, a number of our outstanding PhD students have submitted their PhD theses. Congratulations to Ms Sarah Fitzgerald, Ms Dervla Hogan and Mr Jamie Madden on this wonderful achievement and the very best of luck with your upcoming Vivas. On Wednesday last, Dr Sharon Cadogan successfully defended her thesis entitled ‘The design, implementation and evaluation of a laboratory based intervention to optimise serum immunoglobulin test use in primary care’. Sharon’s PhD explored the efficiency of laboratory test use among primary care physicians in the South of Ireland, with a key focus on the design, development and evaluation of a behaviour change intervention targeting serum immunoglobulin test use. This research was a collaboration with the Department of Haematology at Cork University Hospital, under the supervision of Professor Mary Cahill, Professor John Browne and Professor Colin Bradley. We wish you all the best for your future career Dr Cadogan!

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

2016 EASD Annual Meeting

In September, the European Association for the Study of Diabetes held their 52nd Annual Meeting in Munich. Dr Sheena McHugh, Research Fellow in the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, was in attendance to present her research entitled ‘Prevalence and Risk of Falls among Older People with Diabetes in Ireland’. The aim of this study is to estimate the prevalence of falls among older people with diabetes and identify the risk factors which may mediate the relationship between diabetes and falls using nationally representative data from The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA). The mission of EASD is to promote excellence in diabetes care through research and education.
University of Alberta Placement
Ms Emily Kelleher, PhD Scholar in Population Health and Health Services Research, is currently working on her PhD which explores the implementation of a community-based, family-focused, multicomponent programme for the treatment of childhood obesity. As part of her international placement she got the opportunity to spend time with Dr Geoff Ball and his colleagues at the Department of Pediatrics, University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada. Geoff’s research in pediatric obesity takes a number of different methodological approaches that include clinical trials, qualitative inquiry, reviews, and clinical studies, with the overarching goal of generating new knowledge that can optimize weight management care for childhood obesity. The team’s current research projects include: comparing different group-based, parent-focused interventions for the management of obesity in 8–12 year olds, working with primary care to prevent obesity in children and youth and finally understanding families’ decisions regarding initiating, continuing, and terminating weight management care. The latter area of research is an area Emily is concentrating on and while on placement she received invaluable guidance and advice from Geoff and his team. Emily would like to extend her deepest gratitude to Geoff, Arnaldo, Jill, Nadia, Maryam and Nicole for their warm welcome! For more information you can subscribe to their blog Childhood Obesity Research Insight.

Welcome Dr Christopher Seitz
Christopher Seitz is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Public and Community Health at Liberty University, located in Lynchburg, Virginia. He will be a Fulbright Scholar in the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health at University College Cork. His teaching and research will focus on collaborating with students through a “photovoice” project to advocate for a change in university policies that could improve the health of those on campus. He will also work with faculty members in the department on various tobacco control and alcohol related research projects.

Studies within a Trial (SWAT) Award
Earlier this year the HRB-TRMN School Teaching Awareness of Randomized Trial (START) competition invited 4th, 5th and 6th class students and their teachers to design, carry out and evaluate their very own clinical trial. Students from Cork Educate Together National School (C.E.T.N.S) scooped second place for their entry entitled ‘The Sequential Art Trial’ which proved that cartoons, comics and visual aids can assist children to achieve better results in their tests. In June, Prof Patricia Kearney and Ms Caroline Hurley (UCC START Trial Ambassador) welcomed students and staff from C.E.T.N.S to a small award ceremony held in the Department of Epidemiology and Public to acknowledge and celebrate the students’ great work. The START competition will run again in 2017.
SSM 2016

The Department of Epidemiology was well represented at this year’s 60th Annual Scientific Meeting of the Society for Social Medicine, which was held in the University of York from 13-16th September. During the three days, various colleagues showcased their work in the areas of public policy, health promotion and clinical practice on the prevention and management of obesity, diabetes and related metabolic disorders. Dr. Conor Foley, was in attendance to present his research entitled ‘Understanding perspectives on major service changes: Exploring the development and communication of arguments for and against system reconfiguration’ on the first day of the conference. PhD students Ms Emily Kelleher and Ms Fiona Riordan also presented their research on childhood obesity and diabetes respectively. In addition to these oral presentations, Ms Caragh Flannery, Ms Brenda Lynch, Ms Laura McCarthy, Ms Kate O’Neill and Ms Shelly Chakraborty presented posters highlighting other research projects related to this field. The Society for Social Medicine aims to promote the development of scientific knowledge in social medicine, and covers a range of subjects including epidemiology, the medical and health needs of society, the provision and organization of health services and the prevention of disease.

SPHeRE Updates...

SPHeRE are hosting their 3rd Annual Conference on Thursday 12th January 2017 in the Royal College of Surgeons in Dublin. This conference creates a space for dialogue between all interested stakeholders in the field of Population and Health Services Research throughout Ireland and Northern Ireland and showcases existing studies which will be of interest to Irish policymakers and practitioners. The theme of the 3rd SPHeRE Network Annual Conference is ‘Supporting solutions: Connecting Research, Policy and Practice’. Considering this, the specific role of population health research and health services research in supporting solution for policy and practice will be discussed. Registration will open on 29th November.

Furthermore, the SPHeRE Blog is up and running. The focus of the SPHeRE blog will be to contribute to discussion on topical issues. It is envisaged that the blog will be updated every two weeks with new content ranging from public health policy formation and deliberation to health services practice and population health research. The blog will have a range of contributors from individuals across the SPHeRE network. Should you have any ideas or topics to contribute to the blog, please don’t hesitate to contact Martin Davoren at m.davoren@ucc.ie

RECENT PUBLICATIONS


Visit the department website for a full list of publications.
Welcome to all new postgraduate students to the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health!

Master of Public Health
The Master of Public Health began on the 1st of September 2016 with an extremely strong cohort of students. While final numbers are still being processed through registration, Prof Ivan Perry, Dr. Janas Harrington, Mr Declan Whelan-Curtin and many other teaching staff, welcomed over 50 students to the programme at orientation. Some of these students were part of other innovative, multidisciplinary programmes now linked with the MPH, such as the Masters in Dental Public Health, MSc in Older Person Rehabilitation and the new M.A in Health and Society. The new M.A in Health and Society is a collaboration between the Department of Philosophy and the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health. The very first cohort of 6 students have begun this exciting new course and their experiences and feedback will no doubt mould the future of this programme.

MSc Occupational Health
The MSc Occupational Health began with a fresh intake of students on September 12th 2016 with introductions from Prof Ivan Perry, Dr Birgit Greiner, Mr Declan Whelan-Curtin and contributing internal and external lecturers. The MSc in Occupational Health, this year, sees its largest intake since its inception with 27 students registered for the two year part-time programme and a waiting list in place should places become available. The huge popularity of the programme this year is due to a focused marketing campaign by the Occupational Health team as well as increasing interest in this ever evolving area. Students come from diverse backgrounds in academia and practice such as Nursing, Psychology, Sociology, Public Health, Health and Safety, as well as Health and Safety Practitioners, Managers, Health and Safety Representatives and a Prison Officer. This wide and diverse student profile adds significantly to the peer learning approach encouraged throughout the MSc.

Aurora programme 2016 / 2017
Congratulations to Ms Maura Smiddy, Lecturer in Health Protection, who was awarded with a place on the Aurora programme for 2016 / 2017. Aurora is the women-only leadership development programme developed by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education in the UK in response to research which indicated that the level of women in influential and senior positions in higher education is now lower than 10 years ago. It is a five year research project, with two more years remaining. The programme is targeted at women in lecturer, senior lecturer, research and professional services roles across all academic disciplines and throughout university administration. It is designed to introduce key leadership topics and skills in 4 workshops (each 1 day), complemented by networking, role models and guest speakers at each event. Further, on-going support is ensured through action learning, online resources and institutional level support including mentoring and institutional Aurora Champions. In 2016-17, UCC committed to make again available up to 20 places on the Aurora Programme 2016-2017. Congratulations Maura!
City University London visit

In June, third year SPHeRE scholar Caragh Flannery travelled to the School of Health Sciences at City University London, a world-leading centre for healthcare education and applied healthcare research, for her international placement. Caragh spent three weeks working under the guidance of Dr Ellinor Olander who is a widely published researcher in the field of obesity, weight management and service development for obese pregnant women. Ellinor and Caragh have teamed up to work on a systematic review entitled “Physical activity interventions for overweight and obesity during pregnancy: a systematic review of behaviour change interventions” which is part of Caragh’s PhD. While on placement Caragh attended a Patient and Public Involvement session run by the Centre for Maternal and Child Health Research where women shared their pregnancy experiences and gave advice to different research teams. Caragh also had the opportunity to present her work to the Health Psychology Group at City University; furthermore she gave a seminar at Centre for Behaviour Change, University College London and linked in with Dr John O’Donoghue (a past student of UCC) and his research team working under the guidance of Prof Manen JG, Sharp L, Gavin A. Eur J Cancer Care. DOI: 10.1111/ecc.12589

9th Annual Diabetes Conference

The 9th annual diabetes conference was held in Cork on 21st of September. This conference has grown from strength to strength with an attendance of 98 at the inaugural conference in 2008, to an attendance of 260 booking this year. The theme of this year’s conference was ‘Prevent, Detect, Intervene: Focus on Prevention and Early Intervention’ with the goal that all participants would leave the conference with newly acquired skills and knowledge, that can be used in improving the care that they provide to patients with diabetes. Prof Donal O’Shea, Clinical Lead for Weight Management at St. Columcille’s Hospital in Loughlinstown opened the conference with a session on ‘Where to start with the Prevention of Diabetes’. Ms Marsha Treacy, PhD Student in the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, presented her work on the patient’s perspective of attendance and non-attendance for retinopathy screening while Dr James Ryan, newly appointed Endocrinologist in the Mater Private Hospital in Cork, addressed the conference on achieving optimum control to prevent the complications of diabetes. Finally Ms Pauline Lynch informed the meeting of the services available at the newly opened Diabetes Care Centre in St. Mary’s Street Cork.
Global Burden of Disease

The 2015 Global Burden of Diseases, Injuries, and Risk Factors Study (GBD) was launched in a special Lancet series on 8th October 2016.

Dr Zubair Kabir, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, is the GBD collaborator from Ireland to have contributed to all these seven capstone papers published in the Lancet, as one of the co-authors, in collaboration with the Institute for Health Metrics & Evaluation (IHME), United States- Dr Christopher Murray and his team at the IHME.

With GBD now in its 20th year, for the first time GBD collaborators from around the globe benchmarks countries based on a combination of income, education, and fertility through a new index termed as the Socio-Demographic Index (SDI). This SDI was employed to develop a health-related Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) score, which captures the overall performance of a nation.

Iceland tops the list with an overall SDG score of 85, but Ireland is not far behind, with an overall score of 81 ranking 13. However, the areas where Ireland has achieved an overall score of 50-60 are: overweight; HIV, suicide, alcohol and smoking highlighting the specific areas where the Irish government has to invest in more.

For more information on the GBD Study please contact Dr Zubair Kabir (z.kabir@ucc.ie) or Ms Shelly Chakraborty (shelly.chakraborty@ucc.ie).

MEET...

Dr Zubair Kabir

Dr Zubair Kabir, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, a graduate of medicine from India in 1990, went on to complete a higher specialty training in public health medicine from India in 1996. He moved to Ireland in 1999 for greener pastures on an Indo-Irish Fellowship Program to pursue an MSc in Public Health in TCD, which led to obtaining a PhD from TCD in 2004.

Zubair held post-doctoral positions in TCD, HSPH, Tobacco Free Research Institute Ireland, before joining this Department in September 2012. He was elected a Fellow to the American College of Chest Physicians (FCCP) in October 2014 in recognition of his work in global tobacco control.

Zubair hails from a teaching family and as a result loves teaching. He is a lead on several MPH (both online and campus-based) modules including Epidemiology & Tobacco Control. He juggles teaching and other administrative duties. For example he serves as an Editor on several journals and leads the Tobacco Use Insights Journal. Zubair serves on several committees within UCC including SREC (social research ethics committee) and is also a member of the Research & Post-Graduate Action Committee (RPAC) within the School of Medicine.

Zubair collaborates with international research partners. More recently he contributed to the 2015 Global Burden of Diseases, Injuries, and Risk Factors Study (GBD) which was launched in a special Lancet series on 8th October 2016.

Did you know? On Saturday afternoons you may spot Zubair on St Patrick Street lecturing on the ‘Epidemiology of Islam’!
UPCOMING EVENTS

November 2016
Statistics for Nutrition Research, 9th November, London, UK
9th European Public Health Conference, 9-12th November, Vienna, Austria
AICR 2016 Research Conference on Nutrition, Physical Activity, Obesity, and Cancer, 14-16th November, North Bethesda, United States
ICPAPH: 6th International Congress on Physical Activity and Public Health, 16th-19th November, Bangkok, Thailand
A New Politics for Health – Moving Forward from the Ottawa Charter, 23rd November, Birmingham, UK
European Scientific Conference on Applied Infectious Disease Epidemiology (ESCAIDE), 28th-30th November, Stockholm, Sweden

December 2016
Winter Conference: Diet, Nutrition and Mental Health and Wellbeing, 6-7th December, London, UK
New Horizons Research Conference, 8th December, UCC, Cork

January 2017
Sphere 3rd Annual Conference, 12th January 2017, Royal College of Surgeons, Dublin

February 2017
15th World Congress on Public Health, 3 – 7th April, Melbourne Australia

March 2017
Diabetes UK Professional Conference 2017, 8-10th March, Manchester, UK

ICOHS 2017: 19th International Conference on Occupational Health and Safety, 9-10th March, Miami, USA
6th International Conference on the History of Occupational and Environmental Health, 29-31st March Gothenburg, Sweden

April 2017
International Society for Pharmacoepidemiology (ISPE) Mid-Year Meeting, 1-4th April, London, U.K
15th World Congress on Public Health, 3 – 7th April 2017, Melbourne, Australia
International Forum on Quality and Safety in Healthcare, 26-28th April, London

May 2017
7th ICOH Cardiovascular Diseases and work Environment International Conference, 3-5th May, Varese, Italy
24th European Congress on Obesity (ECO2017), 17-20th May, Porto, Portugal

June 2017
International Society for Behavioural Nutrition and Physical Activity Annual Conference, 7-10th June, Victoria, Canada
23rd Symposium on Shiftwork and Working Time, 19 – 23rd June, Ayers Rock Resort, Northern Territory, Australia

July 2017

August 2017
33rd International Conference on Pharmacoepidemiology & Therapeutic Risk Management, 23-27th August, Nova Scotia, Canada
International Forum on Quality and Safety in Healthcare, 24-26th August, Kuala Lumpur
6th International Congress of the ICOH Scientific Committee on Work Organization and Psychosocial Factors (ICOH-WOPS), 29th August – 1st September, Mexico City, Mexico

September 2017
Xxi World Congress on Safety and Health at Work 2017, 3rd – 6th September, Singapore
UK Congress on Obesity, 7-8th September, Pontypridd, Wales
53rd European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD) Annual Meeting, 11-15th September, Lisbon, Portugal
10th European Public Health Conference 2017; sustaining resilient and healthy communities. 1st -4th November, Stockholm, Sweden,

Ongoing
Stata courses
Stata training

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