



# EPINews

## Department of Epidemiology and Public Health Newsletter

July 2015

### WELCOME

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to this edition of EPINews. Once again, this issue is packed full with news, events and research updates from within the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health. As usual this summer has been hectic, with many colleagues travelling across the island and further afield to present their research at various seminars and conferences. The Department was well represented at the Health Services Research Network conference held earlier this month where they hosted a very successful session on the response patterns to austerity from different health system levels within the Irish context in conjunction with colleagues in the ESRI, RCSI and TCD.

Congratulations are in order for Dr Sheena McHugh, who has been awarded with a prestigious CARDI fellowship. As part of this Sheena will be developing a falls prevention intervention for older people with diabetes. This summer has also seen two more of our outstanding scholars submit and defend their PhD theses. Congrats to Dr Eimear Keane and Dr Fiona Geaney. I would encourage you to circulate EPINews among your colleagues and direct any queries or comments to me at [emily.kelleher@ucc.ie](mailto:emily.kelleher@ucc.ie)

[Ms Emily Kelleher](#)

### DEPARTMENT NEWS

#### Kettil Bruun Society Conference

[Martin Davoren](#) presented his PhD findings on alcohol consumption at the Kettil Bruun Society conference in Munich on June 1st. Martins presentation entitled '*Alcohol consumption among university students: developing a typology of consumption to aid the tailoring of effective public health policy*' was co-authored by [Mary Cronin](#), [Ivan Perry](#) and Karl O'Connor.

The Kettil Bruun Society aims to investigate social, epidemiological and cross-cultural research on alcohol use, to promote the exchange of scientific knowledge and experiences among researchers from various disciplines and to encourage international collaboration

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### CORE TEACHING PROGRAMMES

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## Department well represented at 3rd biennial Global Implementation Conference (GIC)

The Department was well represented at this year's GIC, held in the Convention Centre in Dublin from May 26-28<sup>th</sup> of which *Implementation for Impact* was the key topic. [Dr Elsa Droog](#), Post-Doctoral Researcher, presented research entitled '*Developing the Reconfiguration Plans for Integrated Urgent and Emergency Care Systems [EUCS] – an examination of the consultation process, implementation and sustainability of decisions made*'. Elsa was presenting on behalf of her team on [SIREN](#) (the Study of the Impact of Reconfiguration on Emergency and Urgent Care Networks). [Ms Sarah Fitzgerald](#), HRB Scholar in Health Services Research, presented her work which examined the barriers and facilitators of

implementing complex workplace dietary interventions from the perspectives of key workplace stakeholders as well as the intervention team involved in the implementation of the interventions. [Dr Sheena McHugh](#), Research fellow, presented on her research entitled '*Establishing national leadership to support regional implementation: An Evaluation of the National Clinical Programme for Diabetes in Ireland*'. Finally, [Dr Carol Sinnott](#), Research Fellow for the Department of General Practice, presented her PhD findings on the management of patients with multimorbidity in primary care.

## Impact of the economic recession and subsequent austerity on suicide and self-harm in Ireland

Researchers at University College Cork have found strong associations between the economic downturn and rates of suicide. [Dr Paul Corcoran](#) and colleagues at the [National Suicide Research Foundation](#) looked at the impact of economic recession and austerity in Ireland on rates of suicide and self-harm between 2008 and 2012. Results show that the male suicide rate was 57% higher by the end of 2012 than if the pre-recession trend had continued. The same study also found a significant increase in self-harm rates, with an increase of 31% in men and 22% in women. The study cited a number of factors related to austerity, including reductions in public expenditure, cuts to welfare, substantial healthcare cuts, falling house prices and personal debt.

Dr Corcoran, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health and in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, said that the study "provides a stark reminder of the tragic human costs of policy failure in economic management by governments and other institutions at national and international level". He also went on to say that their findings "highlight the need for reliable and well-standardised data on suicide, self-harm and determinants of suicidal behaviour to guide policy on how best to mitigate the effects of economic crisis on mental health". Read more [online](#) in the International Journal of Epidemiology.



From l-r; Dr Elsa Droog, Ms Sarah Fitzgerald and Dr Sheena McHugh all Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, UCC recently presented their research at the Global Implementation Conference held in Dublin in May

## Date for your Diary: Annual Diabetes in Primary Care Conference

The Diabetes In General Practice Group (DiGP), the Department of General Practice UCC and the HSE, are planning their 8th Annual Diabetes in Primary Care Conference which will be held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September in Oriel House Hotel in Ballincollig, Cork. This conference has grown from strength to strength with 98 attending the first conference in 2008 and with over 250 delegates attending the last 3 years making it one of the biggest Diabetes events in Ireland! The programme aims to address the key challenges faced by health professionals and patients in the management of diabetes. For further information please contact Katie Murphy, Diabetes Nurse Facilitator: [katie.murphy@ucc.ie](mailto:katie.murphy@ucc.ie)

## Follow Us

The Department have embraced the new age of social media and are busy posting and tweeting the latest in research, courses, events and news items. Come join the conversation on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

## CARDI Fellowship

One of our outstanding Research Fellows, [Dr Sheena McHugh](#), has been awarded a Centre for Ageing Research and Development in Ireland (CARDI) [Fellowship](#) from their Leadership Programme in Ageing Research. In total, four fellowships were awarded across the country (North and South of Ireland). The fellowship is for 3 years during which Sheena will be developing a falls prevention intervention for older people with diabetes. Her mentors will be [Prof. Patricia Kearney](#) (Epidemiology & Public Health) and Dr Suzanne Timmons (Centre for Gerontology and Rehabilitation, UCC). Sheena will also be working with a number of national and international collaborators including the TILDA study (the Irish Longitudinal Study of Ageing), the NICOLA study (Northern Ireland Cohort Longitudinal Study of Ageing) and the Centre for Ageing and Population Health (CAPH), University of Pittsburgh in the US. CARDI is the Centre for Ageing Research and Development in Ireland.

The leadership programme is aimed at supporting and building capacity in ageing research across the island of Ireland and promoting the development of future leaders. Congratulations Sheena, we wish you the very best with this fellowship!



*Pictured at the UCC Summer Conferring's 2015, were L-R: Sisters Fionnuala, Deirdre, Eimear and Sinead Keane from Causeway in Co. Kerry, as Eimear received her PhD in Epidemiology and Public Health which focused on childhood obesity in Ireland.*

## Congratulations to Dr Eimear Keane and Dr Fiona Geaney

Huge congratulations to two of our exceptional PhD students Dr Eimear Keane and Dr Fiona Geaney for successfully defending their PhD theses. Eimear's PhD was entitled '*Childhood obesity in Ireland: Recent trends and modifiable determinants*'. As part of her PhD, Eimear played a key role in the design, conduct and dissemination of findings from the [Cork Children's Lifestyle Study](#). Dr. Keane has since joined a multidisciplinary research team working on the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Study in NUI Galway. Fiona's PhD research entitled '*The effect of complex workplace dietary interventions on employees dietary behaviours, nutrition knowledge and health status*' assessed the comparative effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of a complex workplace environmental dietary modification intervention and a complex educational intervention both alone and in combination on employee dietary behaviours, nutrition knowledge and health status. Fiona is due to graduate later this year and is currently working as a Post-Doctoral Researcher here in the Department. We wish them every success for their future.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

[The use of a dietary quality score as a predictor of childhood overweight and obesity.](#) Perry C, Keane E, Layte R, Fitzgerald AP, Perry IJ, Harrington JM. *BMC Public Health* 2015; 15:581

[Needle size for vaccination procedures in children and adolescents.](#) Beirne PV, Hennessy S, Cadogan SL, Shiely F, Fitzgerald T, MacLeod F. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2015, Issue 6. Art. No.: CD010720. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD010720.pub2.

[Applying the Ideal Cardiovascular Health Metrics to Couples: A Cross-Sectional Study in Primary Care.](#) O'Flynn AM, McHugh SM, Madden JM, Harrington JM, Perry IJ, Kearney PM. *Clinical Cardiology.* 2015;38(1):32-8.

[Association Between Obstetric Mode of Delivery and Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Population-Based Sibling Design Study.](#) Curran E, Dalman C, Kearney PM, Kenny LC, Cryan JF, Dinan TG, Khashan AS. *JAMA Psychiatry* 2015

[Validation of diet and urinary excretion derived estimates of sodium excretion against 24-h urine excretion in a worksite sample.](#) Kelly C, Geaney F, Fitzgerald A, Browne GM, Perry IJ. *Nutrition, Metabolism and Cardiovascular Diseases.* May 2015

[The prevalence of Type 2 diabetes and related complications in a nationally representative sample of adults aged 50 and over in the Republic of Ireland.](#) Tracey ML, McHugh SM, Buckley CM, Canavan RJ, Fitzgerald AP, Kearney PM. *Diabetic Medicine.* 2015: n/a-n/a.

[Changing dietary patterns and associated risk factors on trends in blood pressure levels in middle-aged Irish adults: a population-based study.](#) Kabir et al. *J Hum Hypert* 2015

[A Review of Potentially Inappropriate Prescribing in Over 65's in Livinghealth Clinic.](#) Sweeney J et al., *Irish Medical Journal* June 2015 Volume 108 Number 6 p. 180-181

## #HSRN 2015

The [Health Services Research Network](#) (HSRN) Symposium was held on 1-2<sup>nd</sup> July 2015 in Nottingham Conference Centre in the UK. Members of the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health joined forces with colleagues from the Economic and Social Research Institute, the Royal College of Surgeons Ireland and Trinity College Dublin to present a session entitled 'Patterns of Health system response to Austerity- Outcomes, challenges, questions'. This session was chaired by Dr Sarah Barry, TCD and showcased the response patterns to austerity from different health system levels within the Irish context with the aim of exploring the consequences of those responses for health system reform – in practical terms, and with reference to the international context.

[Dr Elsa Droog](#) presented research entitled 'Reconfiguring the Delivery of Urgent and Emergency Care: Drivers, Impact and Sustainability'. This study aimed to analyse the process by which reconfiguration plans were developed, focusing on use of evidence and roles of different stakeholders. [Dr Sheena McHugh](#) presented research entitled 'Develop, persuade & implement' Programme theory for the National Clinical Care Programme for Diabetes' while [Ms Sharon Cadogan](#), PhD Scholar in Health Services Research, presented two posters which highlighted the complexity of laboratory testing in primary care.



Front row left to right: Prof Steve Thomas; TCD, Dr Elsa Droog; UCC, Prof Anne Hickey; RCSI, Dr Sarah Barry; TCD, Dr Sheena McHugh; UCC, Dr Sarah-Jo Sinnott; ESRI and Dr Niamh Humphries; RCSI. Back row left to right: Prof John Browne; UCC, Dr Sara Burke; TCD and Ms Sharon Cadogan; UCC

## MEET...

## ... Dr Sheena McHugh



Dr Sheena McHugh

[Dr Sheena McHugh](#) joined the Department in 2007 as the first UCC student on the HRB Scholars Programme in Health Services Research, now known as the [SPHeRE programme](#). Her PhD research focused on the organisational and quality of diabetes care in the community. Having graduated in March 2012, Sheena tendered for a project commissioned by the Department of Health to evaluate the operational efficiency of the national breast cancer screening programme. She continued her work as a post-doctoral researcher on the HRB Interdisciplinary Capacity Enhancement Post-doctoral Fellowship Scheme. The programme of research focused on maximising the use of existing data sets to examine lifestyle across the life course.

Previous to this, Sheena studied Psychology in University College Dublin. In 2007, she completed an MSc in Health Psychology at University College London. Her thesis examined the influence of illness and treatment beliefs on adherence to treatment regimens in people with diabetes. Sheena has maintained her interest in diabetes research and is currently leading a mixed methods realist evaluation of the National Clinical Care Programme for Diabetes.

In August Sheena will begin a three-year Fellowship awarded by CARDI, the Centre for Ageing and Development in Ireland.

**Did you know** – Dr McHugh is from Strokestown Co Roscommon, home to an international poetry festival and Bosco. This year she ran her first (and hopefully not her last) marathon.

## EVENTS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

### July 2015

[Summer Session for Public Health Studies](#), 1<sup>st</sup> July – 14<sup>th</sup> August, Boston, MA

[10 Day Seminar on the Epidemiology and Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease](#), 26<sup>th</sup> July – August 7<sup>th</sup>, California, US

### August 2015

[3rd International Conference on Epidemiology & Emerging Diseases](#), 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> August, Valencia, Spain

[Summer course on Obesity in a cross disciplinary perspective](#), Online part time (2 weeks workload in total): June 1<sup>st</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> August; Full time on campus: 10 – 21<sup>st</sup> August, Copenhagen, Denmark

[Measurement, Design, and Analysis Methods for Health Outcomes Research](#), 17-19<sup>th</sup> August, Boston, US

[31st International Congress on Pharmacoepidemiology & Therapeutic Risk Management \(ICPE\)](#), 22-26<sup>th</sup> August, Boston, US

[12th Cambridge Diabetes Seminar](#), 23-29<sup>th</sup> August, Cambridge, UK

[International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases](#), 24-26<sup>th</sup> August, Georgia, US

[27<sup>th</sup> Conference of the International Society for Environmental Epidemiology \(ISEE\)](#), Addressing Environmental Health Inequalities, 30<sup>th</sup> August – 3<sup>rd</sup> September, Sao Paulo, Brazil

### September 2015

[9<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Diet and Activity Methods](#), 1-3<sup>rd</sup> September, Brisbane, Australia

[Annual Scientific Meeting of the Society for Social Medicine](#), 2-4<sup>th</sup> September, Dublin, Ireland

[Health & Wellness in the Age of Big Data](#), 3-4<sup>th</sup> September, Madrid, Spain

[Population Health Conference 2015](#), 6-9<sup>th</sup> September, Hobart, Australia

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

[European Childhood Obesity Group \(ECOG\) 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress](#), 12-14<sup>th</sup> September, Stockholm, Sweden

[European Academy of Paediatrics – Congress and MasterCourse](#), 17-20<sup>th</sup> September, Oslo, Norway

[ACE 2015 Annual Meeting: Addressing Systemic Determinants of Health](#), 26-29<sup>th</sup> September, Georgia, US

### October 2015

[EUPHA: 8<sup>th</sup> European Public Health Conference](#), 14-17<sup>th</sup> October, Milan, Italy

[12<sup>th</sup> European Nutrition Conference](#), Nutrition and Health throughout the Lifecycle – Science for the European Consumer, 20-23<sup>rd</sup> October, Berlin, Germany

[World Obesity Federation, Hot Topic Conference: Obesity and Pregnancy](#), 29-30<sup>th</sup> October, London, UK

### November 2015

[ESCAIDE 2015](#), European Scientific Conference on Applied Infectious Diseases Epidemiology, 11<sup>th</sup> -13<sup>th</sup> November, Stockholm, Sweden

### December 2015

[Roles of sleep and circadian rhythms in the origin and nutritional management of obesity and metabolic disease conference](#), 8-9<sup>th</sup> December, London, UK

### May 2016

[International Congress on Obesity \(ICO\) 2016](#), 1-4<sup>th</sup> May, Vancouver, Canada

### June 2016

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

### Ongoing

[Stata courses](#)

[Stata training](#)

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