



# SPH News

## The School of Public Health Newsletter

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### WELCOME TO THE SUMMER 2022 EDITION



Dear Colleagues,

As newly appointed Interim Head of the School of Public Health, I feel very honoured to work with all colleagues in the School, and to build on the strengths, the hugely influential work and strong national and international reputation, established by Professor Ivan Perry and the team over nearly 25 years.

Over the past decades, under Professor Perry's leadership, the School has developed from a small Department to the largest and highest ranking School of Public Health on the island of Ireland, with a high-quality teaching programme and an exceptional research programme led by world-class researchers.

Considering the increase in concurrent public health emergencies, including COVID-19, war and conflict and climate change, public health and mental health have received increased priority by policy stakeholders and practitioners. In this regard, the mental health research, facilitated by the collaboration with the National Suicide Research Foundation would bring added value to existing and future Public Health oriented teaching and research programmes in the School and the collaborative links with the many relevant national and international organisations.

The new issue of the Newsletter covers an impressive number of outputs, achievements, and new initiatives, which is admirable considering the ongoing COVID-19 related challenges over the past months, and very encouraging when we move into a new academic year!

*Professor Ella Arensman,  
Interim Head of School of Public Health*



## WE WELCOME YOUR SUBMISSIONS

*SPH News is published quarterly by the School of Public Health, University College Cork. Please send comments or questions to Ana Contreras Navarro at [acontrerasnavarro@ucc.ie](mailto:acontrerasnavarro@ucc.ie).*

## ISSUE 27 CREDITS

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Ms Felicity Lee

## SCHOOL NEWS

### The School of Public Health won two UCC Research Awards

The UCC Research Awards took place in June 2022. It was wonderful to see the achievements of Professor Ivan Perry recognised with the prestigious Career Achievement Research award. Professor Perry delivered a few words of appreciation on the night.



"It has been a privilege to work in UCC for over 25 years and I am deeply honoured by this Research Career Achievement Award from the university. I am very grateful to the Office of the VP Research, to those who supported my nomination for this award and especially to my wonderful colleagues and students in the School of Public Health. Research, as we all appreciate, is a deeply collaborative enterprise and nothing is achieved in isolation. I feel extremely fortunate to work in UCC with outstanding colleagues who strive every single day for excellence in both research and teaching."

The School of Public Health Winners were:

- Career Achievement Award - Prof Ivan Perry
- Research Award for Open Science 2021 - Dr Karen Matvienko-Sikar PaPOR-TRaIL.



*Members of the PaPOR TRaIL team*

## PaPOR TRaIL: Research Award for Open Science 2021

The **Principles and Practices of Open Research (PaPOR TRaIL)** team, which is led by Dr Karen Matvienko-Sikar and includes Dr Darren Dahly and Dr Brendan Palmer from the School of Public Health, received the UCC Research Award in Open Research at the UCC Research Awards 2022 in June. **PaPOR TRaIL** also placed second in the Open Scholarship Community Galway (OSCG) Open Scholarship prize.

**PaPOR TRaIL** is an open educational resource on open research that teaches undergraduate and postgraduate students the principles and practices of open research. Students can enrol in **PaPOR TRaIL** here: <https://open.ucc.ie/browse/all/cpd/courses/papor-trail-principles-and-practices-of-open-research-003cpd>.

Educators can download materials to include in course content here: <https://osf.io/863ks/>.



### Best wishes to Dr Birgit Greiner & Dr Fiona MacLeod!

The SPH hosted an afternoon to celebrate Dr Birgit Greiner's & Dr Fiona MacLeod's prestigious contribution to the School spanning over 25 years and retirement in June.



*Prof Helen Whelton, Dr Birgit Greiner, Dr Fiona MacLeod and Prof Ivan Perry*



*The celebration took place in the Staff Common Room*



*Dr Birgit Greiner and partner*



*Dr Fiona MacLeod*





*The Committee for the CoMH Learning and Teaching Showcase*

## **The Inter-professional Education and Collaborative Practice in Healthcare initiative**

Dr Maria Roura, Dr Janas Harrington and Dr Karen Matvienko-Sikar are members of the Steering Group of the Inter-professional Education and Collaborative Practice in Healthcare initiative led by the HSE Office of Nursing and Midwifery Services. The different schools of the College of Medicine, as well as service users and student representatives, are involved in this pilot project. Inter-professional Education workshops have been conducted with 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year undergraduate and 2<sup>nd</sup> year graduate entry students across Health Sciences in UCC over the months of January and February. The group is exploring the benefits of Inter-professional Education to help prepare future healthcare professionals to work effectively as part of an inter-professional team and is jointly evaluating the project in order to inform future work.



*Members of the Steering Group of the Inter-professional Education and Collaborative Practice in Healthcare initiative*



*Dr Christie Godsmark*

## **CoMH Learning and Teaching Showcase**

Dr Christie Godsmark pictured above with the rest of the organising committee for the College of Medicine and Health (CoMH) Learning and Teaching Showcase that took place in June. The showcase was opened by Dr Francis Burke, Vice-Dean Academic Affairs, and included a keynote by Professor Albert Leung on Delivering Continuing Professional Development.

Colette Cunningham delivered an oral presentation on 'Moving our presentations into the 21st Century – the experience of using Articulate Rise for the School of Public Health Teaching'. Along with other colleagues from the School, Christie also presented a poster on the day.



## LINK (Learning how to create Integrated community Networks through Knowledge exchange)

The **LINK** project ran from May 2021 to May 2022 and was funded by an Irish Research Council New Foundations Award, 'Enhancing Civic Society' (PI: Dr Sheena McHugh) which supports projects between researchers and civic society groups in the community and voluntary sector. Fiona Riordan and Tanya van de Water worked with a local befriending service to understand service delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic and explore how the service links in with community healthcare services.

COVID-19 has increased the focus on befriending services as a way to connect with and support older people and individuals with physical and mental disabilities who may be vulnerable, cocooning, and lonely. Integrating and coordinating health and social care services around an individual's needs, is posited to improve quality of care, user satisfaction and health system efficiency. Though research on befriending services is growing internationally, most studies to date have focused on evaluating the effectiveness of these services and few have focused on how these services are implemented. There is a dearth of research on how these services operate in Ireland.

The project involved interviews and focus groups with befriending service coordinators, volunteers, and health care professionals working in the community. A stakeholder workshop was hosted to co-produce an action plan for the service. On May 26th the Fiona and Tanya hosted a public webinar 'Providing connection during COVID-19: Exploring the implementation of Friendly Call Cork' which was attended by a mix of researchers, staff from voluntary organisations, volunteers, and health care professionals.

You can read more about the **LINK** project and access the project report and infographic on the [Health Implementation Research Hub website](#).



## Postdoc researchers at 5th UK Implementation Science Research Conference

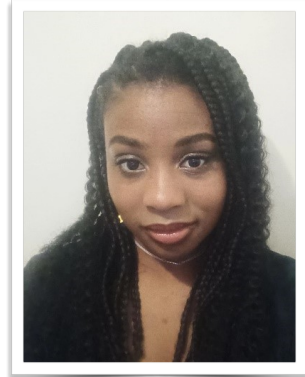
Dr Susan Calnan and Dr Fiona Riordan, postdoctoral researchers in the SPH, presented at the 5th UK Implementation Science Research Conference. The conference, a leading multidisciplinary implementation research conference, was hosted virtually by King's College London on the 14th and 15th July. Susan presented the results of a study conducted among senior stakeholders in the HSE, entitled 'Experiences and perceptions of evidence use among senior health service stakeholders: A qualitative study'. Fiona delivered two rapid fire poster presentations on interim findings from an ongoing study 'Tailoring strategies to support the implementation of **Dose Adjustment for Normal Eating (DAFNE)**, a structured patient education programme for people with Type 1 diabetes' and a protocol for a scoping review 'Characterising processes and outcomes of tailoring implementation strategies in healthcare: a protocol for a scoping review'.

## BSc Public Health Students expanding internationally!

### The European experience - UNIC European Generations CityLabs programme 2021/22

Rachel Jackson (3<sup>rd</sup> year BSc in Public Health Sciences student) was selected to join a competitive UNIC European University 'Generation's CityLab' programme while on work placement. The European University of Post Industrial Cities (UNIC) is an alliance of eight universities from eight European countries: University of Deusto (Spain), Ruhr University Bochum (Germany), University College Cork (Ireland), Koç University (Turkey), University of Liège (Belgium), University of Oulu (Finland), University of Zagreb (Croatia) and Erasmus University Rotterdam (coordinator, the Netherlands). The UNIC alliance reflects a strong European post-industrial identity by shaping a new generation of Europeans able to cooperate and work within different European and global cultures, in different languages, and across borders, sectors and academic disciplines.

Congratulations Rachel!



### The European experience — the student's story



The UNIC CityLabs is a European programme and its aim is to connect students from eight different European Universities with city stakeholders to co-create innovative solutions to real-life urban problems in society. I was fortunate to be selected for this programme as one of the students representing UCC in 2022. We participated in virtual intensive learning seminars throughout May, in which they provide us with the tools to engage our critical thinking and problem-solving skills. It was incredibly team-focused, which I loved, as we were placed in teams made up of students from the different universities in

accordance with our chosen case team. My team and I had to come up with new ways for a non-profit organisation to fund its activities and figure out what funders gain from contributing. The non-profit we were assisting was Oulu Urban Culture Centre, Finland, and their project manager, Heikki, who guided us as our mentor. The physical phase of the course, which started in June, involved travelling to Oulu in Finland for ten days to meet the teams, course leaders, members of the student board and the mentors in person. We continued our seminar sessions working hard to develop ideas and solutions relating to our issue and finally presenting them at the UNIC conference and closing ceremony two weeks later. During this period, it was truly unforgettable as you get to explore the city of Oulu, learn so much about the culture and get the Finnish student experience. I gained valuable skills, increased my self-confidence and made many international friends - thus I recommend it to any student who wants to apply.

**Rachel Jackson, 3<sup>rd</sup> year BSc Public Health Sciences**



### *The American Experience —studying in West Virginia University 2021/22*

In semester 2 of my third year (2021/2022) I had the opportunity to undertake an exchange at West Virginia University.

From the beginning, there was a very welcoming and friendly atmosphere. WVU has a wide range of modules, I was fortunate enough to be able to experience these.

Class sizes were small, and all of my professors went out of their way to make me feel welcome and included. Throughout the semester they welcomed my input from a different perspective. The academic system worked very differently from what I was used to, but I quickly adjusted and found this way of learning valuable.

WVUs team spirit was not only visible at the sporting events, but was seen throughout the whole university.

I was lucky enough to visit multiple States. I visited many amazing places, but one, in particular, stood out to me. I visited the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History which included a temporary exhibit — ‘Outbreak: Epidemics in a Connected World’.

I had the honour of meeting with the President of West Virginia University, E. Gordon Gee. He welcomed me into the WVU family. After meeting him I can really see where the friendly and welcoming atmosphere in the university stems from. I also had the pleasure of giving one of my professors and his wife a tour of Cork including UCC during their trip to Ireland.

I have made lifelong friends and life-lasting memories, and I am beyond grateful to UCC for allowing me this opportunity. John Denver’s Country Roads has taken on a whole new meaning for me.

**Jill McCarthy, 3<sup>rd</sup> year BSc Public Health Sciences**



Jill McCarthy and the President of West Virginia University, E. Gordon GEE



Stalaker Hall in the city of Morgantown, West Virginia



West Virginia University Coliseum - Basketball stadium

## New report on Irish findings from the European Web Survey on Drugs published

The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) has developed the European Web Survey on Drugs (EWSD) to collect data from a wide range of people who use drugs. In 2021, Ireland participated in the EWSD for the first time. Information was collected from 5,796 people across Ireland and a report showing the main findings was published in August 2022. The report's authors are Dr Seán Millar, research support officer and post-doctoral researcher in the School of Public Health, Dr Deirdre Mongan and Mr Brian Galvin of the Health Research Board (HRB), and Ms Nicki Killeen, Mr David Evans and Dr Eamon Keenan of the Health Service Executive (HSE). Some key findings from the report include the following:

- Among the survey sample of people who reported using drugs in the last year, cannabis was the most commonly used drug, followed by cocaine, MDMA and ketamine.
- In the last year, 36% of respondents had used one drug, 20% used two different drugs and 44% used three or more.

- Among 18-to 24-year-old respondents, 55% of males and 50% of females had used three or more drugs in the past year.
- Ketamine use was reported by almost one-quarter of overall respondents. More than one-third of 18–24-year-old males reported using ketamine in the last year.

Commenting on these findings, Dr Eamon Keenan, National Clinical Lead, Addiction Services at the HSE said: "The survey has been a useful tool to capture emerging drug trends such as the current popularity of ketamine. These findings support what we are witnessing across festivals this summer, with ketamine appearing as the substance of choice, often used as part of a polysubstance pattern with stimulant drugs MDMA and cocaine."

The full report can be accessed here: <https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/36571/>



## SPH researchers attended the EASO Masterclass in Obesity Prevention

Dr Janas Harrington, Senior Lecturer and Director for the BSc Public Health Sciences, and Dr Ana Contreras Navarro, postdoctoral researcher in the SPH, participated in the European Association for the Study of Obesity (EASO) Masterclass in Obesity Prevention. The Masterclass was organised in Annecy, France from the 13th-15th July. As a member of EASO, Janas Harrington presented issues of sustainability in food policies and asked the challenging question, 'Why is the healthy choice not the easy choice by default?'

## Public Health Group



EASO Summer School :  
Masterclass in the Prevention and Management of Obesity  
11 to 15 July 2022 / Annecy - France

*Les Pâquis*  
HSE CENTRE FOR SOCIAL HEALTH



## Implementation Science Training Institute three-day training event: July 2022

The **Implementation Science Training Institute (ISTI)** took place at Nano Nagle Place as part the activities of the Health Implementation Research Hub at UCC's School of Public Health.

Twenty-four PhD students, researchers, academics, and practitioners from the Irish health service learned about the relatively new field of implementation research.

The **ISTI** is a blended training programme and participants had already completed online training modules.

From the 5th-7th of July, they participated in 3 days of in-person training including:

- Specialised presentations from leaders in the field on advanced topics such as equity and implementation science, mechanisms of action, and implementation trial design and measurement,
- Small group work and project feedback from expert facilitators,
- Peer and facilitator networking,
- Q&A with international experts, and
- Mentoring opportunities.

The training programme was facilitated by national and international experts in implementation science including Byron Powell, Rachel Shelton, Cara Lewis, Geoff Curran, Jeremy Grimshaw, Sheena McHugh, Michael Sykes, Jenny McSharry as well as researchers from the Health Implementation Research Hub, Fiona Riordan and Susan Calnan. The course was ably coordinated by Tanya van der Water and Tania McCollum from the School of Public Health.

The **ISTI** is funded by the Health Research Board Research Leader Award held by Dr Sheena McHugh, Senior Lecturer at the School of Public Health and programme director.

The next training institute will run in 2024. To join the mailing list for updates, contact: [HIRH@ucc.ie](mailto:HIRH@ucc.ie)

Find out more about the Health Implementation Research Hub [here](#) or follow @HIRH\_Ireland on Twitter.



*ISTI workshop attendees and organisers at Nano Nagle Place*



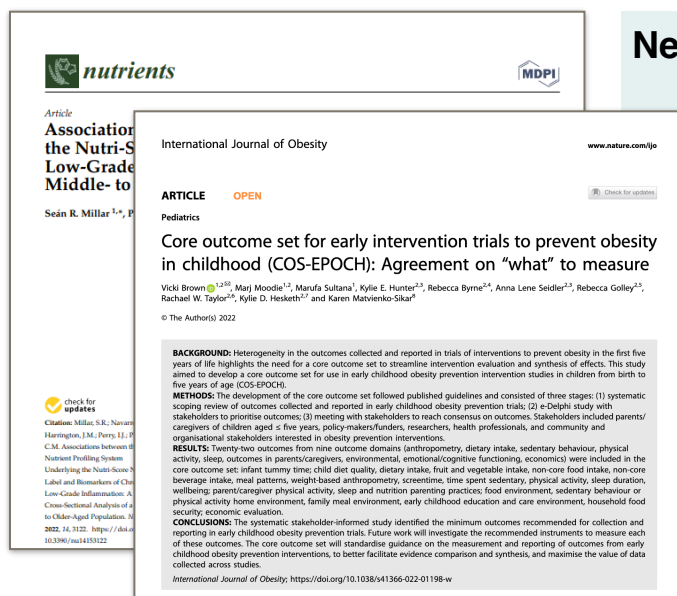
Health  
Implementation  
Research Hub

## New paper on associations between the nutrient profiling system underlying the Nutri-Score nutrition label and biomarkers of chronic low-grade inflammation published

Low-grade systemic inflammation is associated with a range of chronic conditions. Diet may modulate inflammation and public health strategies are needed to guide consumers' dietary choices and help prevent diet-related disease. Front-of-pack labelling is believed to be a key public health policy measure that could be implemented to promote healthy eating and prevent disease. The Nutri-Score labelling system, which uses five colours, is considered promising in a broad international context. Recent research, conducted by the School of Public Health (led by Dr Seán Millar and Dr Catherine Phillips), examined relationships between the Nutri-Score labelling system and a range of inflammatory biomarkers using data from Mitchelstown cohort study.

This research, which has been published in the journal *Nutrients*, found that higher Nutri-Scores, reflecting poorer nutritional quality, were consistently and positively associated with eight of the 14 examined biomarkers in crude and adjusted analyses. Studies which have investigated the impact of the Nutri-Score and its five categories on consumers' perceived healthiness perceptions and purchasing intentions, found that the presence of the Nutri-Score enabled respondents to better assess the healthiness of food products. Surveys carried out in France, Spain, Belgium and Germany have also shown that the Nutri-Score is perceived favourably by consumers and is the preferred format when compared to other nutrition labels tested. However, the authors of the present study noted that controversy exists regarding the Nutri-Score and its proposed adoption by the European Union Commission as a front-of-pack labelling system for European Union member states. Nevertheless, findings from the School of Public Health research and other studies suggest that the Nutri-Score labelling system may be an important tool to help consumers make more healthy food choices and also prevent inflammatory dysregulation and inflammatory-related disease.

The Open Access article can be accessed here: <https://www.mdpi.com/2072-6643/14/15/3122>



## New publication in the International Journal of Obesity

Dr Matvienko-Sikar and colleagues in **CRE EPOCH Translate**, recently published a core outcome set for childhood obesity prevention interventions in the International Journal of Obesity.

A core outcome set is a standardised set of minimum outcomes that should be measured in a particular health area to improve standardisation in that area, which can improve evidence syntheses and reduce research waste. Work is ongoing to determine how best to measure the core outcomes.



## Associate Professor Bryon Powell delivers a seminar on Implementation Mapping!



On July 21st the Health Implementation Research Hub were delighted to host a seminar entitled "Implementation Mapping: An approach to selecting and tailoring implementation strategies", delivered by Bryon Powell.

Byron is an international expert in implementation science and faculty at the Brown School at Washington University in St Louis. Byron was visiting Ireland during July as a Fulbright Specialist. Overall, 27 people registered for the seminar, with over 20 attendees. Byron presented an introduction to the Implementation Mapping approach along with some practical examples, drawing on the Collaborative Organizational Approach to Selecting and Tailoring Implementation Strategies (COAST-IS) study.



If you are interested in Implementation Mapping you can read more about it in this article by Maria Fernandez and colleagues.

The Fulbright Specialist Awards allow interested institutions to bring American citizens to Ireland for a period of two to six weeks. These awards are a creative and cost-effective way to access US academics and professionals who may not be free to come for longer periods as part of the Fulbright US Scholar Awards. The Specialists can be brought in to assist with any aspect of the institutional development, such as new courses, research programs, or administrative structures, for example.



## WONCA Europe 2022

Aileen Callanan, PhD researcher and Laura Donoghue, MPH student, attended the WONCA Europe Conference in London in June presenting the results of their respective projects.



*Left photo: Aileen Callanan PhD researcher presenting project entitled 'Atrial fibrillation in Primary Care in Ireland: preliminary results of a pilot screening programme'. Photo to the right: Laura Donoghue MPH student and Aileen Callanan.*



## UPDATES FROM THE NRSF

### IASP 10th Asia Pacific Conference

Professor Ella Arensman presented a keynote lecture at the 10<sup>th</sup> International Association for Suicide Prevention Asia Pacific Conference in Queensland on May 4th.

Read Ella's slides here: <https://tinyurl.com/2wxyj2yv>.



### Launch of the Cork-Kerry Alliance Against Depression

On May 6th the National Suicide Research Foundation launched the Cork-Kerry Alliance Against Depression in collaboration with EAAD-BEST. A big thank you to all speakers and attendees for an informative and engaging event. Find out more about EAAD-BEST [here](#).

Watch the European Alliance Against Depression's Depression Awareness Video [here](#).



### Second Annual Suicide & Self-Harm Research Workshop

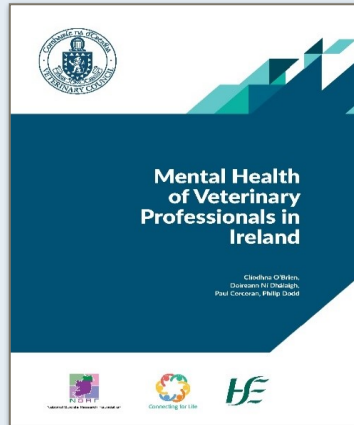
The Connecting Suicide and Self-Harm Researchers on the island of Ireland (C-SSHRI) collaboration, led by Project Coordinator Ms Fenella Ryan, hosted the Second Annual Suicide and Self-Harm Research Workshop on May 23rd and 24th.

Prof Ellen Townsend delivered a keynote lecture on involving people with lived experience in self-harm research in addition to several excellent presentations from early to mid career researchers on a range of diverse topics including:

- Real-time suicide surveillance
- Suicide bereavement
- Interventions for individuals with suicidal behaviour
- Suicide prevention among refugees







## Mental Health of Veterinary Professionals in Ireland report

On April 26th the National Suicide Research Foundation published a new report on the Mental Health of Veterinary Professionals in collaboration with the Veterinary Council of Ireland and the National Office for Suicide Prevention.

The report, co-authored by Dr Clíodhna O'Brien and Dr Paul Corcoran, is available to download [here](#).

A webinar detailing the findings is also available to watch [here](#).

## GP training on Depression, Suicide and Self-Harm



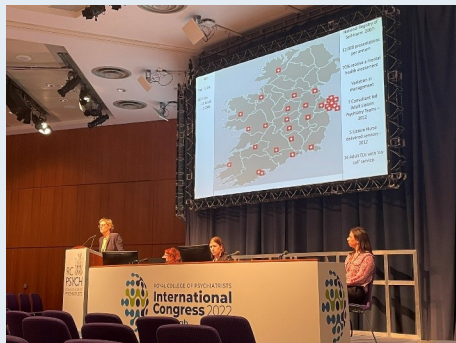
In May Prof Ella Arensman, Dr Mallorie Leduc and Ms Almas Khan delivered training to GPs in the Cork and Kerry area on responding to Depression, Suicide and Self-Harm. More information on the project can be found here: <https://eaad-best.eu>

We look forward to working with the Irish College of General Practitioners to host more information events in the future.

## Royal College of Psychiatrists International Congress

Dr Eve Griffin and Dr Katerina Kavalidou presented at the International Congress of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Edinburgh on June 21st. Both Eve and Kat contributed to a symposium on Ireland's National

Clinical Programme for Self-Harm and Suicidal Ideation. More information [here](#).



## MENTUPP Plenary Meeting

In early June the **MENTUPP** consortium held a plenary meeting in Budapest.



Several NSRF researchers also attended the 15th Conference of the European Academy of Occupation Health Psychology in Bordeaux from July 6th-8th.

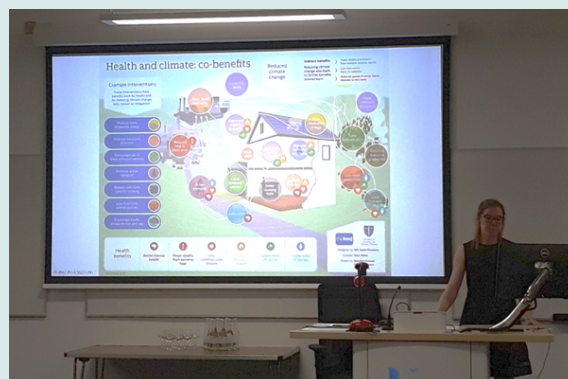
## UCC SDGs champions

Dr Christie Godsmark joined the rest of the UCC Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) champions at a gathering with Professor John Cryan, Vice-President for Research and Innovation. SDGs workshops are being rolled out across UCC to raise awareness and involve researchers directly in mapping their research to the SDGs framework. You can find out more [here](#). If you are interested in mapping your research to the SDGs please click [here](#), or if you would like to provide a case study to be published in the report, please click [here](#). For any queries, please contact Christie.



## CATCH Project at Environ2022 in Belfast

Dr Christie Godsmark presented on the **CATCH** project (**C**ommunication and **A**ction through **T**ree-planting for **C**limate-**H**ealth) at Environ2022 hosted by Ulster University, Belfast in June. This is linked to [a short communication published in The Journal of Climate Change and Health](#). The CATCH project concluded in December 2021 and through an online event, local tree-planting and the production of a short animation, the project aimed to communicate climate change and its impact on human health and wellbeing, with a large focus of the project on the benefits of green spaces and trees. You can watch the animation [here](#).



## Updates from the NRSF *continued from pages 12-13*

On June 14th and 15th the National Self-Harm Registry Ireland team hosted a hybrid meeting in UCC. It was fantastic to link up with our Data Registration Officers (DROs) who are based across Ireland. Our DRO's play a pivotal role in the NSHRI and we would once again like to commend them for collecting comprehensive data in challenging circumstances during the pandemic.



## AWARDS

### School of Public Health successful in attaining two HRB Emerging Investigator Awards!



*Featured in the media: HRB Press release available [here](#) / see Irish Examiner (news media) article [here](#).*



Dr Karen Matvienko-Sikar and  
Dr Monica O'Mullane

Congratulations to Dr Karen Matvienko-Sikar and Dr Monica O'Mullane (currently based in UCC's ISS21) who have both been awarded a prestigious Health Research Board (HRB) Emerging Investigator Award (EIA). The HRB Emerging Investigator Award supports talented individuals at a critical career transition stage to establish themselves as independent health investigators and to develop collaborative researchers who can facilitate actionable knowledge. Of 42 eligible applications to the 2022 EIA round, only 9 awards were made, and receipt of two of these awards by Dr Matvienko-Sikar and Dr O'Mullane is a fantastic achievement for the School of Public Health.

Monica's project, HIA-IM, focuses on Health Impact Assessment (HIA), which is an established tool for analysing potentially detrimental health outcomes of policies, programmes and projects. HIA generates evidence on the distribution of health impacts across population groups, including groups traditionally marginalised and particularly vulnerable to policy changes. HIA-IM will capitalise on the synergy of recent policy drivers for HIA implementation, namely Healthy Ireland 2013-2025 and the Institute of Public Health HIA guidance (2021). The project will build a HIA implementation model in order to enhance intersectoral approaches in tackling health inequalities in policy development. This will be done by employing a hybrid implementation science framework using action research methodologies during the conduct of two HIAs, one on the national Climate Action Plan, the other on the local Cork City Development Plan. HIA-IM aims to strengthen intersectoral policy and practice in tackling health inequalities through the development of an enhanced HIA implementation model, as well as informing the national roll-out of the Institute of Public Health Ireland HIA programme.

Dr Matvienko-Sikar's research aims to provide researchers, practitioners, and policymakers with a toolkit of measurement instruments (e.g., questionnaires, clinical assessments) to better evaluate infant-feeding interventions and prevent childhood obesity. Childhood obesity is a critical public health issue, with one in four children currently experiencing overweight or obesity. Development of a standardised toolkit of measurement instruments, will address existing variability in the approaches and quality of how infant feeding is examined in childhood obesity prevention efforts. Dr Matvienko-Sikar will work with national and international experts in childhood obesity, infant feeding, measurement, knowledge translation, nutritional epidemiology, stakeholder engagement and evidence synthesis to achieve the project aims. The project outputs will enhance the evaluation of interventions to prevent childhood obesity, with potential for significant impact on, and meaningful improvements for, population health.



## Dr Isabela Troya starts her recently awarded IRC government of Ireland 2-year fellowship for new study on self-harm and suicide in older people



Dr Isabela Troya, School of Public Health and National Suicide Research Foundation, University College Cork, has started this summer her recently awarded IRC Government of Ireland two-year Fellowship (2022-2024) for the study entitled “Examining individual and psychosocial determinants of self-harm and suicidality in older adults: improving risk assessment and management”.

Annually in Ireland, more than 500 people die by suicide and more than 12,000 present to hospital following self-harm, of which 15% are older adults (aged >60 years of age). Older adults who self-harm are 20 times more likely to die from unnatural causes, and 67 times more likely to die by suicide when compared to their peers who have not self-harmed. Worldwide, the age group that is most likely to die by suicide is represented by older adults, in particular men. In addition, in Ireland, there is insufficient research into self-harm and suicide in older adults.

To gain a better understanding of self-harm in older adults, and to inform policy, patients, clinicians, and the Irish healthcare system, this research will address factors that lead to older adults harming themselves. Building on her award-winning PhD and postdoctoral research to date on self-harm in older adults, this research will address the risk factors and risk profile of older adults who self-harm. The research outcomes will impact self-harm clinical practice and policy in Ireland, which can be translated into international settings.

During her fellowship, Isabela will collaborate with colleagues at **The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA)** at Trinity College Dublin and continue to be involved with the National Suicide Research Foundation using the National Self-Harm Registry of Ireland. You can read more about

## Aoibheann Kavanagh completes a HRB Summer Student Scholarship with the Health Implementation Research Hub team



Aoibheann, who is starting her final year of the BSc Public Health Sciences this year, was a recipient of the HRB Summer Student Scholarship Award 2022.

Aoibheann undertook her 8-week scholarship under the supervision of Dr Fiona Riordan, working on a project entitled “The experiences of individuals living with diabetes during COVID-19: A photo voice project”.

The project explored the experiences of individuals living with diabetes during COVID-19 and documents the impact of attending structured diabetes education programme, **Dose Adjustment for Normal Eating (DAfNE)**. The aim was to better understand the benefits of such programmes and the process of adopting the programme principles in every-day life, particularly throughout the pandemic.

Photovoice is a community-based participatory approach, whereby participants take photographs of important and meaningful aspects of their lives and explain their significance. It was used in this project to offer an insight into the reality of living with diabetes during the pandemic. The project outputs will serve as a resource to raise awareness about diabetes management during COVID-19 and to highlight the role of education programmes like **DAfNE**.

## Congratulations!

Dr Frances Shiely has recently been successful in an ERASMUS+ grant to support education on climate change. The grant kicked off in the new year and is well under way. Grant title: CLIMATE\_MED: Developing new curriculum outlines and learning materials on climate change's health impacts for medical schools. Partner Institution: 2021-2-HU01-KA220-HED-000050972.

## MEET

### Margaret Mannix-Sheahan



Margaret joined the School of Public Health in March 2022 as Executive Assistant on the Programmes Team supporting the Infection Prevention & Control courses. She previously worked in tourism and in an administrative role with Cork County Council. Margaret began in University College Cork as an Executive Assistant in the Faculty of Commerce in 1999 and subsequently moved to the College of Science, Engineering & Food Science Office in 2015. She took a career break from 2018 until 2022. She lives in Castletownroche, North Cork with her husband and two daughters.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

A commentary piece written together by Dr Zubair Kabir, Senior Lecturer, and Colette Cunningham, College Lecturer in the School of Public Health, was recently published in the prestigious medical journal The Lancet Infectious Diseases.

The full commentary, entitled “The global burden of cryptococcosis—a neglected tropical disease?”, is available for reading here: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1473309922005163>.



RECENT PUBLICATIONS *continued*

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- Pirkis, J., Gunnell, D., Shin, S., Del Pozo-Banos, M., Arya, V., Aguilar, P.A., Appleby, L., Arafat, S.Y., Arensman, E., Ayuso-Mateos, J.L. and Balhara, Y.P.S., 2022. Suicide numbers during the first 9-15 months of the COVID-19 pandemic compared with pre-existing trends: An interrupted time series analysis in 33 countries. *EClinicalMedicine*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eclinm.2022.101573>.
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## UPCOMING EVENTS



Registration is now open for the Joint Public Health Conference co-hosted by UCC on 30th of November 2022. This conference will be held online. The title of this year's all-island conference is '**Healthy Planet, Healthy People**' and will focus on how the global climate crisis is impacting our health. Sir Patrick Vallance, Chief

Scientific Adviser to the UK Government, will provide an opening address at the conference and confirmed keynote speakers include Dr Nick Watts, NHS Chief Sustainability Officer; Dr Maria Neira, WHO Director of Public Health and Environment; and Professor John Barry, School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics, QUB. You can register [here](#) and if you would like to submit an abstract, please click [here](#). If you have any queries, please contact **Dr Christie Godsmark** who is on the organising committee.

## Irish Global Health Network Conference – Global Imbalance and Social Inclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a massive impact on health systems and economies across the world, reinforcing pre-existing inequities and systematic weaknesses. As we enter a break in history, the opportunity is upon us to address the vulnerabilities of a system that failed to serve us all equally. In this context, the Irish Global Health Network Conference 2022 will be convened under the theme Global Imbalance and Social Inclusion. Early Bird Registration Now Open!

**IRISH GLOBAL HEALTH NETWORK CONFERENCE 2022**

Co-hosted by the HSE Global Health Programme  
Sponsored by Irish Aid

**HYBRID CONFERENCE**

26th October: Trinity College Dublin  
27th October: Online

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ABSTRACT SUBMISSION NOW OPEN!

**Accepting abstracts until 5th September.** Visit website for more information here: <https://globalhealth.ie/ighn-conference-2022/>.

**Date for your diary:**  
Communicating Trials  
with Different Audiences.  
**November 21st 2022.**  
Half-day event.

More details to follow.  
Organised by  
[f.shiely@ucc.ie](mailto:f.shiely@ucc.ie) for the  
HRB CRF-UCC with the  
HRB TMRN.

**Celebrating World Mental  
Health Day 2022:  
Suicide, Self-Harm and Mental  
Health Hybrid Seminar**

**October 14th at 9.30am**

Register your free attendance here:  
<https://tinyurl.com/yxpj7xz8>



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## World Suicide Prevention Day Webinars - Launch of MHAINTAIN and EAAD-BEST Public event & Demonstration

**Save the Date**

The National Suicide Research Foundation and UCC's School of Public Health invite you to join two interrelated Webinars:

Date: September 15th 2022 | Time: 11.30AM-2.30PM (via Zoom)

**Presentation topics:**

**11.30 - 12.30pm** - Early Identification of Suicide and Self-Harm Risk and Comorbid Mental and Physical Disorders: An Interdisciplinary Training, Research and Intervention Programme (MHAINTAIN) - A new Research Training Programme

**1.00 - 2.30pm** - EAAD-BEST: Perspectives on Early Identification of Suicide Risk and Prevention - Public event & Demonstration workshop

To RSVP, please visit [LINK](#).

For MHAINTAIN questions, contact [margareta@ucc.ie](mailto:margareta@ucc.ie)  
For EAAD-BEST questions, contact [eaadbest@ucc.ie](mailto:eaadbest@ucc.ie)

Join us for the launch of our new HRB funded project 'Early Identification of Suicide and Self-Harm Risk and Comorbid Mental and Physical Disorders: An Interdisciplinary Training, Research and Intervention Programme' public event and demonstration on Thursday September 15th at 11:30am. **Register your free attendance here:** <https://tinyurl.com/tkszax6r>

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