



# SPH News

## The School of Public Health

### Newsletter

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School of  
Public Health

#### WELCOME

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the Autumn 2021 edition of SPH News. The School has had a busy and eventful Summer and start of term as evident in these pages. There is much to acknowledge and celebrate as we embark on a new academic year, including new staff members, conferences hosted and attended, an interactive Public Health Masterclass, the launch of a new national PPI Network, research grants awarded, peer reviewed publications and national reports. I am very grateful to all of our staff for their commitment and dedication to the core work of the school - teaching, research, public health advocacy and community engagement, despite the ongoing challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Unfortunately, case numbers of Covid-19 remain high and we need to maintain a high level of care and vigilance in relation to social distancing, the use of face masks and other hygiene measures including ventilation, while doing all we can to encourage uptake of the Covid-19 vaccine in all of our staff and students. We are drawing on our experience from last year to offer blended learning to our undergraduate and campus based post-graduate students this semester. It is great to see our students again in the Western Gateway Building, albeit behind masks!

This newsletter gives us an opportunity to introduce and welcome new members of staff. Since the last edition of SPH News in October of 2020, we have been joined by Christine Allan, Ana Contreras Navarro, Sally Griffin, Mallorie Leduc, Tara Kenny, Tania McCollum, Abbey Murphy, Amy O'Keefe, Lauren O'Mahoney, Georgie O'Sullivan, and Tanya Van De Water.





## 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 26 CREDITS

### EDITOR:

Ana Contreras Navarro

### CONTRIBUTORS:

Christie Godsmark, Claire Buckley, Edel Burton, Emmy Racine, Jennifer Palin, Karen Matvienko-Sikar, Kate O'Neill, Lisa Delaney, Maria Roura, Maura Smiddy, Michelle McNamara, Niall McTernan, Seán Miller, Selena O'Connell, Shiely Frances, Tania McCollum, and Tara Kenny

### MEDIA PROMOTION:

Caroline Seacy

### SCHOOL MANAGER:

Felicity Lee

### WELCOME MESSAGE (cont. from page 1)

I am also delighted to welcome a new Editor of SPH News, Dr Ana Contreras Navarro. Ana works in Public Health Nutrition and Food Policy and she joined the School in July, 2021 as a Postdoctoral Researcher working on an EU Joint Action funded project (Best-ReMaP) focused on the marketing of unhealthy food products to children across the EU. I am very grateful to Ana for taking on the role of Editor of SPH News. The Newsletter plays an important role in promoting the vision, work and ethos of the School and I know that all of our colleagues wish Ana well in this challenging role.

—Professor Ivan Perry  
Dean of the School of Public Health

## The School of Public Health is celebrating its commitment to Women in STEMM

The School is delighted and proud to have received an Athena Swan Bronze Award during the National Athena Swan Ireland Award ceremony with Minister Simon Harris. The ceremony took place virtually on 20th October, allowing us to showcase our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

#AthenaSwanIreland

Sincere thanks to all those who helped the School to reach this important milestone.

Find out more at <https://www.ucc.ie/en/publichealth/athenaswan/>

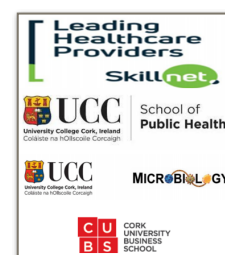


## SCHOOL NEWS

### Postgraduate Certificate in Infection Prevention and Control in the School of Public Health

Last October the Minister for Health, Stephan Donnelly, and the Minister for Higher Education, Simon Harris, jointly welcomed the new Postgraduate Certificate in Infection Prevention and Control in UCC's School of Public Health. The course was launched last September 2020 and was specifically designed to educate healthcare staff in infection prevention and control theory with the aim of reducing spread of COVID-19 in nursing homes. The course, supported by Skillnet Ireland was developed by a multidisciplinary team, amid increasing concerns around the growing community transmission of Covid-19.

The aim of the Certificate in Infection Prevention and Control is to equip graduates with the knowledge to support them in the coordination and management of infection prevention and control services in the clinical setting. The programme uniquely focuses on management, quality management and leadership led by the School of Public Health, Dr Maura Smiddy, and supported by the School of Microbiology, Dr David Clarke, and Cork University Business School, Prof Ciara Heavin. To facilitate busy professionals working within current social distancing restrictions the course is facilitated completely online.

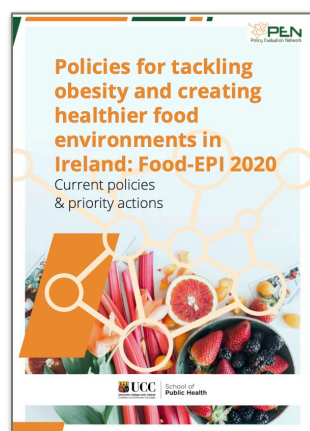


We had 41 graduates from the programme from the 2020-2021 academic year with a further 44 students enrolled for the 2021-2022 academic year.

### Evaluation of Obesity Policies in Ireland

The HRB Centre for Health and Diet Research was commissioned to conduct a mid-way evaluation of the Irish Government's National Obesity Policy and Action Plan (OPAP). The OPAP provides a ten-year road map for Government and associated agencies' action aiming to tackle preventable, non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in effective ways. The OPAP is based on scientific evidence, international best practice and stakeholder consultation, including health professionals and children. The main objective is to create cohesive action across multiple settings to maximise national efforts in preventing NCDs.

The forthcoming OPAP Evaluation Evidence Document—to be concluded by the end of this year—highlights the level of policy implementation related to each of the 'Ten Steps Forward' outlined in the OPAP. The work is led by Dr Janas Harrington and Lisa Delaney.



It is important to note that in November 2020, Dr Janas Harrington, working with colleagues in the School of Public Health and with Dr Stefanie Vandevijvere from the Scientific Institute of Public Health (Sciensano) in Belgium, developed the first Healthy Food Environment Policy Index (Food-EPI) report for Ireland.

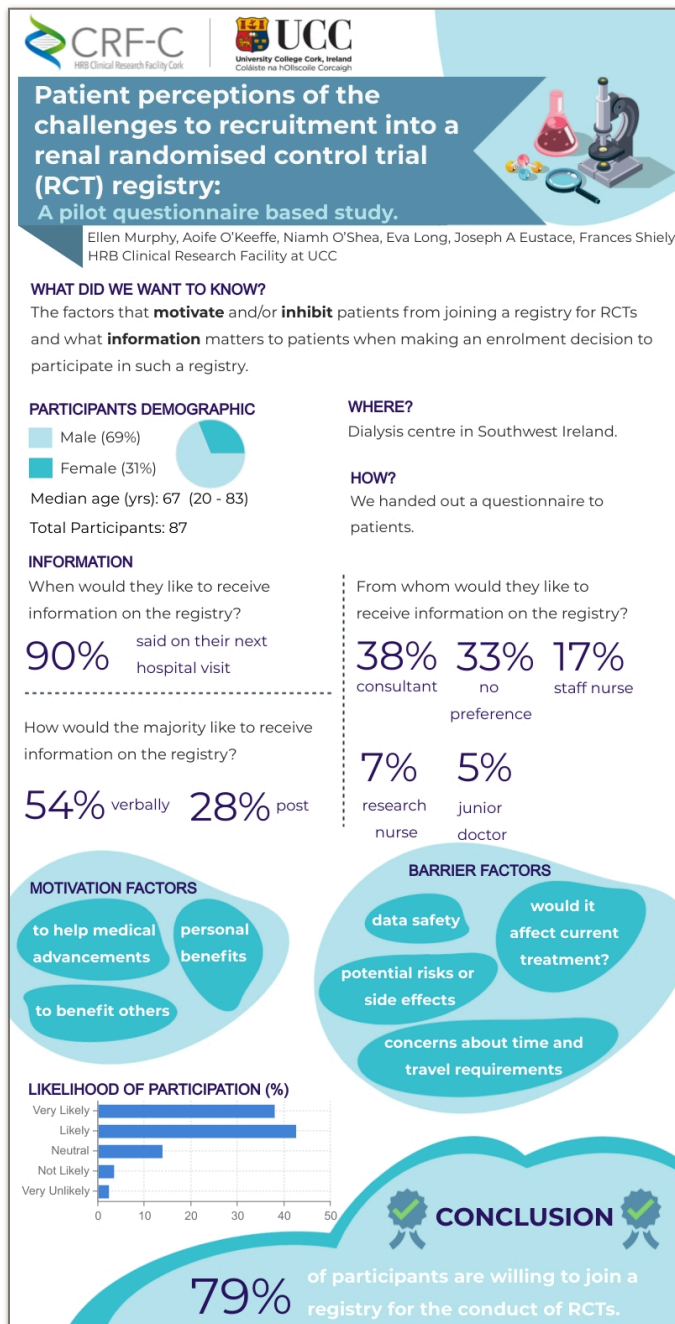
The Irish Food-EPI 2020 report represents key background work for the OPAP evaluation. It assessed the level of implementation of policies and infrastructure support for improving the healthiness of the food environments and benchmarked progress against international best practice. Read the full report here: [Ireland Food-EPI](#).



## Patient Perceptions on the Challenges of Recruitment to a Randomised Trial

One of our BSc Public Health Sciences 2020 graduates, Ms Ellen Murphy, did a HRB TMRN Summer scholarship with Dr Shiely Frances in 2019 and published the paper recently. Read the article here: [trialsjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13063-021-05526-9](https://trialsjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13063-021-05526-9).

To ensure applicability to Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) partners, she produced the infographic shown below and an animated video of the results, available here: [youtube.com/watch?v=x9zNZNofdP0&feature=youtu.be](https://youtube.com/watch?v=x9zNZNofdP0&feature=youtu.be)



## Breakthrough Cancer Research Project

Recent findings from a Breakthrough Cancer Research-funded project led by Dr Catherine Phillips at University College Dublin, investigating the contribution of diet and lifestyle factors to cancer risk, have been profiled in the charity's newsletter. Dr Seán Millar, who is a former PhD student of Dr Phillips and currently a post-doctoral researcher in the School of Public Health, led the analysis.

The research, published in the journals *Nutrients*, *Atherosclerosis* and *Clinical Nutrition* highlights the importance of protective lifestyle factors, including having a high-quality diet (rich in fruits, vegetables and legumes, and low in added sugar and fats), moderate alcohol consumption, being physically active (particularly at moderate intensity), not smoking and having a normal BMI, in terms of achieving more favourable biomarker profiles and potentially conferring cardioprotective effects.

Read the papers here: (1) [doi.org/10.3390/nu13010222](https://doi.org/10.3390/nu13010222), (2) [doi.org/10.1016/j.atherosclerosis.2020.10.005](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.atherosclerosis.2020.10.005), and (3) [doi.org/10.1016/j.clnu.2021.06.005](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clnu.2021.06.005).





## Street tablet use in Ireland – Results from a School of Public Health Trendspotter study on use, markets and harms

The non-medical use of prescription drugs has become a global health concern. The non-medical use of pharmaceuticals is a unique category of substance misuse in a number of ways, as the scale of the problem is largely unknown owing to lack of data.

In Ireland, converging signals of the ongoing non-medical use of pharmaceuticals ('street tablets') among clients of community-based, drug harm reduction service agencies in Dublin were noted in 2018. In order to better understand these converging signals, a team led by Dr Seán Millar in the School of Public Health, the Ana Liffey Drug Project (ALDP) and the Health Research Board, with support of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), conducted a Trendspotter study to examine patterns of use, markets and harms related to street tablets in Ireland.

Experts provided data on use, changing consumption patterns and availability, with a majority indicating that there has been an increase in the use of street tablets between 2016 and 2019. Drugs which are commonly misused in tablet or capsule form include benzodiazepines, Z-drugs, and gabapentinoids. The user groups identified included high-risk opioid users, prison populations, people with complex and multiple needs and young people. Among these groups, the motivations for using street tablets included their intoxicating effects, to enhance desired effects from illicit substances, to help withdrawal symptoms, to improve sleep and to reduce stress.

A number of issues were identified which could help to manage the street tablet market. In terms of preventing leakage from legitimate sources, a robust electronic prescribing system could help better control access and might help prevent 'doctor shopping'. There is also a need to understand and be effective in addressing why individuals are using tablets in the first place. In this context, supporting medical professionals to better understand and be equipped to address the demand encountered is important, as is the need to get existing public health and harm reduction messaging into novel market spaces, such as the online environment.



To read the full report, visit:  
[drugsandalcohol.ie/31872/](https://drugsandalcohol.ie/31872/)

## Capture-Recapture Study to Estimate the Prevalence of Opioid Use

In November 2020, a new Health Research Board funded project was awarded to the School of Public Health. Since that time, Dr Michael Hanrahan, Dr Seán Millar, Prof Ivan Perry and collaborators from the Department of Ecology in the School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences have conducted a Capture-Recapture study to estimate the prevalence of problem opioid use in Ireland between 2015 and 2019. For this study, the SPH drew on data from the Central Treatment List of methadone users, the Irish Probation Service, the National Drug Treatment Reporting System and the National Drug-Related Deaths Index.

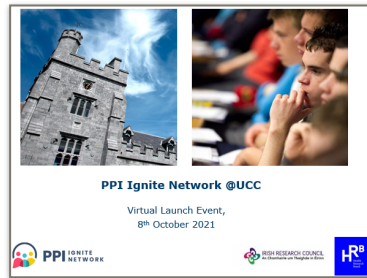
A final report on the prevalence of opioid use in Ireland will be published early next year.

## Launch of PPI Ignite Network at UCC

A virtual event was held on Friday 8th October 2021 to officially launch PPI Ignite Network at UCC. Led by Prof Patricia Kearney, PPI Ignite Network at UCC is part of the National PPI Ignite Network. The network aims to advance the involvement of the public in research, from the generation of ideas to the delivery of research results.

Funded by the Health Research Board, the Irish Research Council, four UCC colleges and two research centres, PPI Ignite Network at UCC aims to build capacity for high-quality Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) both within UCC and amongst wider society and embed PPI within institutional policies and practices.

The launch event was chaired by Prof Kearney and Dr Emmy Racine, Programme Manager of PPI Ignite Network at UCC.



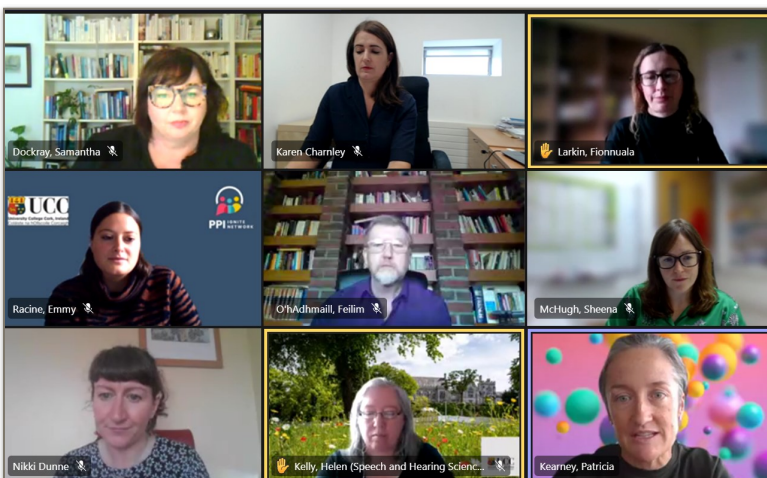
The event showcased different examples of PPI from across the University and highlighted PPI contributors and partner organisations' perspectives on the importance of PPI. Speakers included Dr Samantha Dockray, School of Applied Psychology, Dr Sheena McHugh, School of Public Health, Dr Feilim O'hAdhmaill, School of Applied Social Studies, Dr Nikki Dunne, Family Carers Ireland, Karen Charnley, All Island Institute for Hospice and Palliative Care, and Stephanie Skeffington, PPI contributor and patient advocate for rheumatic and respiratory conditions.

The initiative was then officially launched by Dr Martin Galvin, UCC Civic and Community Engagement Officer.

Speaking about PPI Ignite Network at UCC, Prof Patricia Kearney said: *"This is a fantastic opportunity for UCC. I am fully committed to building capacity for research that meaningfully involves patients and members of the public so we can genuinely answer peoples' needs and affect change in our society. I look forward to creating interdisciplinary collaborations and working with our local partner organisations to realise the potential of this initiative."*

Dr Nikki Dunne, Research Officer with Family Carers Ireland, one of the local partners working with UCC on this initiative also spoke about the importance of PPI Ignite Network at UCC: *"Family Carers Ireland is committed to supporting research that has relevance, meaning and impact on how family carers can live better quality lives. Embedding the carer voice at every stage of carer-related research is an important element of this work. Partnering with UCC on the new PPI Ignite Network is therefore a fantastic opportunity for us to continue this work and strengthen our relationships with researchers at UCC."*

In the coming months, PPI Ignite Network at UCC will be running a number of PPI seminars, training courses and support activities. For more information, please contact [ppi@ucc.ie](mailto:ppi@ucc.ie).



*Some of the speakers and attendees at the virtual launch event.*

## The Food Policy Research Team participated in the EASO 2021 Public Health Masterclass

From 11th to 13th October, Dr Ana Contreras Navarro and Ms Sally Griffin, members of the Food Policy Research Team, participated in an interactive Public Health Masterclass organized by the European Association for the Study of Obesity (EASO). Established in 1986, EASO is a federation representing 36 nations working to address unhealthy excess weight across Europe. The resources created by EASO for professionals include updated science-based guidelines for the treatment and for the prevention of obesity, specialized Task Force Working Groups and online educational opportunities that can be accessed through their webpage: [easo.org](https://easo.org).

The Masterclass was coordinated and chaired by Dr Janas Harrington, School of Public Health, UCC, who kindly introduced each of the seven lecturers and leading experts in the field of public health across Europe, Prof Harry Rutter, Prof Sharon Friel, Dr Jeroen Lakerveld, Dr Tommy Visscher, Dr Emma Boyland, Prof Jean-Michel Oppert and Dr Susanna Lehtinen-Jacks. The agenda focused on the current study of the social determinants of health and covered topics on the upstream determinants of obesity, challenges in public health action, unhealthy food marketing, systems mapping, commercial determinants, physical activity and the built environment, and effective public health interventions.

## Launch of the Irish Suicide Bereavement Survey



The National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF) and Healing Untold Grief Groups (HUGG) launched the Irish Suicide Bereavement Survey on Tuesday 5th October. This is the first large-scale national study of adults bereaved by suicide in Ireland. This survey will provide valuable information on the experiences of those who have been bereaved by suicide and the supports they found helpful.

You can find out more and access the survey here: [hugg.ie/suicide-bereavement-survey/](https://hugg.ie/suicide-bereavement-survey/).



*Pictured: Eve Griffin (NSRF) and Fiona Tuomey (HUGG)*



## Early Career Researcher Workshop

Dr Kate O'Neill and Ms Niamh McGrath were involved in organising the Early Career Researcher (ECR) workshop at the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Society for Social Medicine and Population Health which was held virtually in September. The event was titled "Research Pathways – Looking Ahead as an ECR". Ms Niamh McGrath spoke at the event on the benefits of having a mentor and shared some key tips for getting the most out of mentoring.

Ms Niamh McGrath spoke at the event on the benefits of having a mentor and shared some key tips for getting the most out of mentoring. The Society of Social Medicine and Population Health recently re-launched their mentoring scheme. For anyone interested in finding or becoming a mentor, you can find more information here: [socsocmed.org.uk/mentoring/](https://socsocmed.org.uk/mentoring/).



Kate and Niamh will step down from their roles on the ECR subcommittee at the end of this year. Over their three years on the committee, they held the roles of Chair, Local Organising Officers, Welfare Officer and Mentoring Officer.

The ECR subcommittee is currently looking for new members, if anyone is interested they can contact Kate ([kate.oneill@ucc.ie](mailto:kate.oneill@ucc.ie)) or email

## The Society for Social Medicine and Population Health – Annual Scientific Meeting

The Society for Social Medicine and Population Health held their 65th Annual Scientific Meeting virtually in September. Dr Kate O'Neill presented her work from the SCaRLeT project on childhood socioeconomic position and sex-specific trajectories of metabolic traits across early life. The abstract for this presentation is published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health (JECH).



## CATCH Study

Dr Christie Godsmark is co-ordinating the Irish Research Council New Foundations-funded CATCH Project (Communication and Action through Tree-planting for Climate Health).

In May 2021, CATCH hosted an online event with an opening address from Éanna Ní Lamhna, President of the Tree Council of Ireland. Along with various interesting presentations, the event projected a video kindly produced and edited specifically for CATCH by ecologist Ted Cook and Linda Fenesova in Macroom. Further outputs from the CATCH project include an animation film currently in production with Aperture Media and the planting of 20 Irish native trees by some members of the local community.

To stay up-to-date with CATCH, visit: <https://www.ucc.ie/en/catch/>.



## New report on the prevalence of drug, tobacco and alcohol use in Ireland published

Dr Seán Millar, a post-doctoral researcher in UCC's School of Public Health, recently co-authored a report detailing the prevalence of drug, tobacco and alcohol use in Ireland. Dr Millar is a Research Support Officer for the Irish national focal point of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) at the Health Research Board (HRB).

The HRB manages the commissioning of research and monitoring projects on behalf of the Department of Health and as part of its role as the Irish national focal point to the EMCDDA.

Prevalence and patterns of drug use is one of the five key epidemiological indicators used by the EMCDDA to assess the drug situation in Europe.

The first survey on drug use in the general population was carried out in Ireland during 2002-2003. The survey was repeated in 2006-2007, 2010-2011 and 2014-2015. The 2019-2020 Irish National Drug and Alcohol Survey (NDAS) is the fifth such study undertaken in Ireland and will provide vital information to assess the current drug situation since 2002-2003 and inform the development of responses to this situation in the coming years.

Key findings from the 2019-2020 NDAS show that regarding alcohol use, there has been little change since the 2014-2015 survey. Nevertheless, while one in four survey respondents indicated not using alcohol, more than one-half of drinkers consumed alcohol in a hazardous way, and one in five drinkers met the criteria for alcohol use disorder. The prevalence of tobacco use among survey respondents aged 15 years and older was found to be 17.4%. There has been a decline in the use of tobacco in each of the five waves of the NDAS.

Regarding illicit drug use, there has been no change in the prevalence of recent illegal drug use since 2014-15; however, there have been changes regarding the types of drugs used. While there has been a small decrease in the prevalence of cannabis use, the use of stimulant-type drugs (including cocaine, ecstasy, and amphetamines) has increased and there has also been an increase in the use of LSD and poppers. In addition, compared with previous surveys, those who reported illegal drug use were more likely to report the recent use of two or more illegal substances.

Frank Feighan TD, Minister of State for Public Health, Wellbeing and the National Drugs Strategy commented:

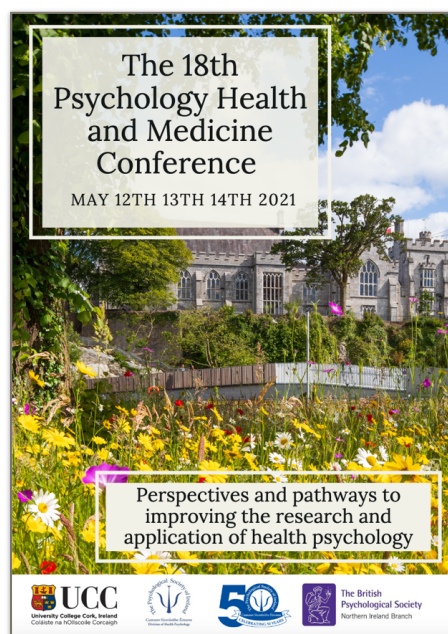
*"I welcome the publication of National Drug and Alcohol Survey. The publication of this important survey will play a key role in guiding the path forward and highlighting those areas which require our attention."*



For more information, visit: [hrb.ie/publications/publication/the-2019-20-irish-national-drug-and-alcohol-survey-main-findings/returnPage/1/](https://hrb.ie/publications/publication/the-2019-20-irish-national-drug-and-alcohol-survey-main-findings/returnPage/1/)

## The 18th Annual Psychology Health and Medicine Conference

The 18th Annual Psychology Health and Medicine Conference was virtually co-hosted by the School of Public Health and the School of Applied Psychology in University College Cork over three half days, on the 12th, 13th and 14th of May 2021. Dr Karen Matvienko-Sikar was conference chair, and other members of the organising committee from the School of Public Health include Niamh McGrath and Dr Sheena McHugh.



The three internationally recognised keynote speakers were:

- Prof Sonia Lupien, (director of the Centre for Studies on Human Stress, University of Montreal)
- Prof David Hevey (Head of the School of Psychology in Trinity College Dublin and founding director of the Trinity College Research Centre in Psychological Health) and
- Prof Marcus Munafò (Professor of Biological Psychology, and, co-director of the Tobacco and Alcohol Research Group, University of Bristol)

There were 18 live oral presentations and 61 poster presentations on a broad range of research topics including: patient and public involvement; chronic disease; child and adolescent health; public mental health; sexual health; research methods and measures; health services; psychophysiology; and COVID-19. Members of the School of Public Health and the National Suicide Research Foundation delivered excellent oral and poster presentations.

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## 31st World Congress Of The International Association For Suicide Prevention

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National Suicide Research Foundation researchers presented on a range of topics at the virtual World Congress of the International Association for Suicide Prevention from September 21st-24th, including:

- Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention in Occupational Settings, Suicide Bereavement, Real time surveillance of suicide and the development of ED surveillance systems for self-harm
- Harmful impact of suicide and self-harm content online
- Hospital-presenting self-harm & ideation in Northern Ireland before, during & after the Brexit referendum
- Trends in IDO with illegal drugs
- Comorbidity among Self-Harm Major Repeaters
- Self-Harm and Suicidal Ideation among the Irish Traveller population
- Self-Harm among the prison population
- Self-Harm and Suicide in Young people - Associated risk factors and Evidence based interventions
- National Suicide Prevention Strategies

Over 1100 delegates from 59 countries registered for the conference. A huge congrats to Dr Grace Cully on winning the best poster award for her study on 'Assessment and aftercare following high-risk self-harm presentations to the emergency department'.



## AWARDS

### Congratulations to Dr Claire Buckley

Dr Claire Buckley was elected to Fellowship of the Faculty of Public Health Medicine by the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (Summer 2021). Fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland is the most prestigious category of membership and requires nomination by peers. Being awarded a fellowship is an internationally recognised benchmark of professional excellence.

Since the onset of the pandemic, Claire has co-led the development of the national Contact Management Programme, a fundamental part of the national COVID-19 control strategy. The aim of the Contact Management Programme is to notify results to people tested for COVID-19 and to identify and manage close contacts. The Contact Management Programme has been instrumental in identifying and closing down chains of transmission of COVID-19, thereby helping to slow the progress of the COVID-19 epidemic in Ireland. The Contact Management Programme was recently awarded a prestigious HSE Excellence Award for Service Development and Innovation in Responding to COVID-19.



Claire, a UCC medical graduate, initially trained as a GP. She was awarded a Master of Public Health in 2009 and a PhD in 2014 in chronic disease epidemiology and health services research. In 2016, Claire was appointed as a Specialist in Public Health Medicine (HSE) and as a Senior Lecturer (School of Public Health, UCC).

Prior to the pandemic, Claire worked on the Integrated Care Programme for Chronic Disease (ICP-CD). Her background and training in primary care and public health provides Claire with a unique insight and perspective into the prevention and management of chronic disease, which is reflected in her research interests. Her leadership nationally in working across the health service and academia is reflected in her role in a number of HRB-funded programmes including the Collaborative Doctoral Programme in Chronic Disease Prevention (CDP CDP) and Diabetic Foot Disease from Prevention to Improved patient Outcomes (DFD PRIMO); Claire is supervising PhD candidates funded by these projects. She is also a co-PI on a HRB-funded secondary data analysis project on chronic disease prevention entitled Evidence for Policies to Prevent Chronic Conditions (EPICC). Overall, Claire is co-PI/PI on grants worth >9 million Euros in this research area including as lead PI in Munster for a H2020 grant exploring atrial fibrillation screening (AFFECT-EU).

Claire is co-PI on HRB and SFI-funded COVID-related projects within UCC and nationally with the Health Protection Surveillance Centre, the Irish Epidemiological Modelling Advisory Group to NPHET, and UCD. Claire has co-authored numerous peer-reviewed publications and supervised and mentored many students and trainees at under and postgraduate level within health service and academic organisations ensuring that her work impacts directly on policy and practice. Congrats Claire!

## Update on HRB Collaborative Doctoral Awards

### Collaborative Doctoral Programme in Chronic Disease Prevention (CDP-CDP)

Clair Haseldine and Edel Burton joined the School of Public Health in September 2020 as part of the Collaborative Doctoral Programme in Chronic Disease Prevention, funded by the HRB Collaborative Doctoral Award. The Collaborative Doctoral Programme in Chronic Disease Prevention (CDP-CDP) focuses on prevention of chronic disease across the lifespan and across the spectrum from wellness to disease, using three of the most common chronic diseases in Ireland as the research focus (diabetes, cardiovascular disease and stroke). The CDP-CDP is a 4 year structured doctoral programme combining elements of the HRB doctoral training Programme in Population Health and Health Services Research (SPHeRE) with tailored CDP-CDP specific components.

Clair is a Chartered Physiotherapist who worked as a community physiotherapist with the HSE in West Cork for the last 15 years. She graduated from Trinity College Dublin and spent some years working as a physiotherapist in the USA.



In 2009, in collaboration with two nursing colleagues, Clair developed the West Cork Diabetes Prevention Programme in response to the growing problem of diabetes in Ireland. She completed her MSc in Advanced Healthcare Practice in 2016 at the University of Limerick. Clair's project will focus on the implementation and scale-up of the national diabetes prevention programme in Ireland. The first study will use mixed methods to understand participation in the national programme which will be delivered online in 2021. Her supervisors are Dr Sheena McHugh (primary), Prof Patricia Kearney and Dr Grainne Donoghue (UCD).



Edel is a Pharmacist and has experience in community, hospital and research settings. She was a research assistant on the Horizon 2020 funded multi-centre "Optimising Therapy to prevent avoidable hospital

admissions in the multimorbid elderly" (OPERAM) clinical trial.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Edel works as a Pharmacist vaccinator and Pharmacist on Duty in the Cork City Hall mass vaccination centre. Edel sits on the HSE Antimicrobial Resistance and Infection Control Division Content Review Group for respiratory antimicrobial guidelines in the community. Her PhD work focuses on "Acute Stroke/Transient Ischaemic Attack Care During a Pandemic: Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on acute stroke care in Ireland and implications for future policy and service delivery". Her supervisors are Prof Patricia Kearney, Dr Claire Buckley and Dr Vera McCarthy (UCC School of Nursing).

## We extend a Warm Welcome to Tania

Tania McCollum joined the School of Public Health in July this year as Research Administrator for the HRB Research Leader Award CUSTOMISE and an Executive Assistant for Dr Sheena McHugh. For most of her career, Tania has worked as a chef and nutritional therapist which involved a lot of travel. Four years ago, to facilitate lifestyle changes she returned to administration, working as a school secretary, and is now delighted to have started her administrative position in research in the School of Public Health.



## Diabetic Foot Disease: from PRevention to treatment to IMproved patient Outcomes (DFD PRIMO) Programme

Jennifer Pallin has joined the School of Public Health as part of a programme titled Diabetic Foot Disease: from PRevention to treatment to IMproved patient Outcomes (DFD PRIMO) funded by a separate HRB Collaborative Doctoral Award.

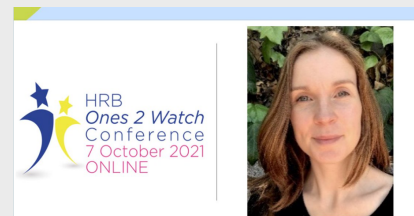
Jennifer has a B.Sc. (Hons) in Podiatry from NUI Galway, a Masters of Public Health (MPH) from University College Dublin and five years' clinical experience as a Podiatrist in Cork & Kerry Community Healthcare Services. While working clinically, her role primarily involved implementation of interventions to prevent diabetic foot disease and progression to lower extremity amputation. Jennifer's project is titled "Combined diabetic foot and retinal screening: a novel approach to early detection of complications" and will explore whether it is feasible to screen for risk factors for diabetic foot disease at the RetinaScreen visit. She is carrying out her PhD under the supervision of Dr. Claire Buckley (primary), Prof. Patricia Kearney & Prof. Sean Dinneen (NUI Galway).



### One2Watch: Jennifer Pallin

Congratulations to Ms Jennifer Pallin, 2nd year SPHeRE PhD scholar, who is this years' HRB Ones2Watch Competition winner. Jennifer was one of four finalists who were shortlisted to provide a video on their research and the impact it will have. She won the votes of a panel of judges and the audience at the event for her video "The importance of diabetic foot screening to prevent ulceration and amputation". The video can be found here: [youtube.com/watch?v=m56cCTFKCyU](https://youtube.com/watch?v=m56cCTFKCyU)

Dr Karen Matvienko-Sikar was an invited panellist at the HRB Ones2Watch event on October 7th. Karen spoke at the panel discussion on "Coming out of COVID: diverse perspectives on key learnings from the pandemic and how they can be applied looking forward."



Dr Karen Matvienko-Sikar

## UCC 2022

Dr Christie Godsmark was invited to be part of the working group led by Dr Paul Bolger, manager of Environmental Research Institute (ERI) focusing on **Action 2.1.2** Map our Research onto the UN SDGs.

**Dr Karen Matvienko-Sikar** is co-applicant on a recently successful Australian National Health and Medical Research Council Centre for Research Excellence award to establish a Centre for Research Excellence in the Early Prevention of Obesity in Childhood-Translate (EPOCH-Translate). The \$2.5 million funding award will enable EPOCH-Translate to identify and translate the most effective, cost-effective, scalable and sustainable approaches to preventing obesity and reducing obesity-related behaviours in children aged 0-5 years.





## Congratulations to Michelle McNamara

Ms Michelle McNamara joined the SPH as part of the HRB Research Leader Award CUSTOMISE (Comparing and Understanding Tailoring Methods for Implementation Strategies). Michelle is also a part of the SPHeRE programme (Structured population health and health services education). Her research will focus on comparing and understanding methods for tailoring implementation strategies to support older persons services. Michelle is a 2020 graduate of the UCC SPH MPH programme.

With over 20 years' experience in Physiotherapy and Primary Care Services, during the 1st wave of the Covid -19 pandemic Michelle implemented a project to support older adults to stay physically active while restricting themselves to their homes. This project extended beyond the 1st wave and it won the National Health Service Excellence Award "Supporting a Healthy Community".




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## New NSRF Awards

In recent months, National Science Research Foundation researchers have been successful on several funding applications:

- **Dr Isabela Troya - Government of Ireland Postdoctoral fellowship.** Title: *Examining individual and psychosocial determinants of self-harm and suicidality in older adults: improving risk assessment and management*
- **Dr Eve Griffin – Irish Research Council.** Title: *Exploring the benefits of peer support groups for those bereaved by suicide*
- **Ms Ruth Benson & Prof Ella Arensman - HEA Covid-19 funding call.** Title: *Suicide and Self-Harm Observatory*
- **Ms Eunice Phillip & Prof Ella Arensman - HEA Covid-19 funding call.** Title: *Self-Harm and Suicide Awareness (SHARE)*
- **Dr Isabela Troya, Prof Ella Arensman & Ms Karen Mulcahy - COMH Covid-19 Research funding award.** Title: *COVID-19-Estimating the impact of public health measures on physical, mental, and social wellbeing: 1 year after Ireland's first implemented public health measures*
- **Prof Ella Arensman, Ms Eileen Williamson, Ms Eileen Hegarty & Mr Niall McTernan - 3rd EU Health Programme (HP-PJ-2020).** EAAD-Best: *Adapting and Implementing EAAD's Best Practice Model to Improve Depression Care and Prevent Suicidal Behavior in Europe*
- **Dr Eve Griffin, Dr Eimear Ruane-McAteer, Dr Caroline Daly & Dr Clíodhna O'Connor – NOSP Grant Scheme for Collaborative Research Projects.** Title: *Experiences of supports for suicide bereavement in Ireland: A national survey*
- **Dr Elaine McMahon & Dr Katerina Kavalidou - NOSP Grant Scheme for Collaborative Research Projects.** Title: *Beyond Bullying - The Role of Humiliation in Suicidality in Ireland's Youth*
- **Dr Grace Cully & Dr Caroline Daly - NOSP Grant Scheme for Collaborative Research Projects.** Title: *Retrospective chart review of patients presenting to the Emergency Department following High Lethality Intentional Drug Overdose (IDO) and subsequent prescribing practices*
- **Prof Ella Arensman, Dr Isabela Troya, Dr Anvar Sadath & Ms Karen Mulcahy - NOSP Grant Scheme for Collaborative Research Projects.** Title: *Upscaling of the Self-Harm Assessment and Management of Self-Harm in General Hospitals (SAMAGH)*

## MEET

## Ms Tanya van de Water



Born and bred in South Africa, Tanya completed her MA in Clinical Psychology at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in 2013. Following time in community service as a clinical psychologist, she worked as a research assistant in the Department of Psychiatry and in the Department of Paediatric at Stellenbosch University in 2014-2017. Tanya has experience in several topics, including foetal alcohol syndrome epidemiological research, longitudinal neurodevelopmental outcomes in children exposed to HIV, task-shifting psychological intervention in traumatized adolescents, and capacity building of emerging researchers in sub-Saharan Africa.

## Did you know?

In the last four years, Tanya has lived in four cities and two countries (Cape Town and Johannesburg, South Africa, Maynooth and Galway, Ireland) enjoying the benefits of remote work in private practice. As a clinician researcher, Tanya is passionate about making mental health care more accessible to the general public through technology and training. When not packing or unpacking boxes, Tanya enjoys K-drama, chocolate, and dancing.

# Coronavirus COVID-19

**If you have fever and/or cough you should stay at home regardless of your travel or contact history.**

If you have returned from an area that is subject to travel restrictions due to COVID-19 you should restrict your movement for 14 days. Check the list of affected areas on [www.dfa.ie](http://www.dfa.ie)

## How to Prevent

**Wash**  
your hands well and often to avoid contamination

**Cover**  
your mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing and discard used tissue

**Avoid**  
touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands

**Clean**  
and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

**Stop**  
shaking hands or hugging when saying hello or greeting other people

**Distance**  
yourself at least 2 metres (6 feet) away from other people, especially those who might be unwell

## Symptoms

> Fever (High Temperature) > A Cough > Shortness of Breath > Breathing Difficulties

## For daily updates visit

[www.gov.ie/health-covid-19](http://www.gov.ie/health-covid-19)  
[www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)

**All people are advised to:**

- > **Reduce** social interactions
- > **Keep a distance** of 2m between you and other people
- > **Do not** shake hands or make close contact where possible

If you have symptoms visit [hse.ie](http://hse.ie) OR phone HSE Live **1850 24 1850**

Ireland is operating a containment strategy in line with WHO and ECDC advice

Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

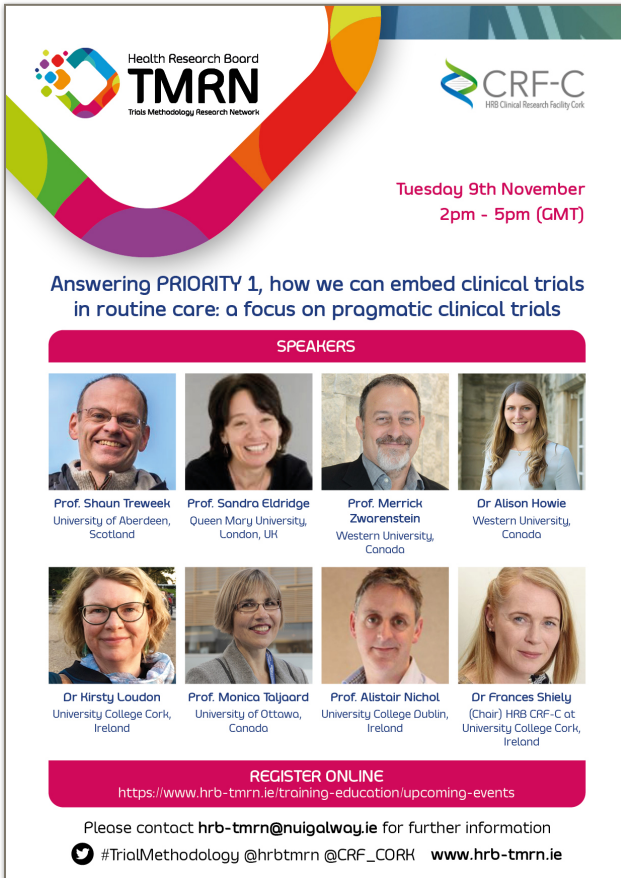
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## UPCOMING EVENTS











Health Research Board  
**TMRN**  
Trials Methodology Research Network

CRF-C  
HRB Clinical Research Facility Cork

**Tuesday 9th November**  
2pm - 5pm (GMT)

**Answering PRIORITY 1, how we can embed clinical trials in routine care: a focus on pragmatic clinical trials**

**SPEAKERS**

			
Prof. Shaun Treweek University of Aberdeen, Scotland	Prof. Sandra Eldridge Queen Mary University, London, UK	Prof. Merrick Zwarenstein Western University, Canada	Dr Alison Howie Western University, Canada
			
Dr Kirsty Loudon University College Cork, Ireland	Prof. Monica Taljaard University of Ottawa, Canada	Prof. Alistair Nichol University College Dublin, Ireland	Dr Frances Shiely (Chair) HRB CRF-C at University College Cork, Ireland

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## CONTACT US

### School of Public Health

Fourth Floor  
Western Gateway Building  
University College Cork  
Cork

### General inquiries:

Tel: 00353 21 420 5500

email: [schoolofpublichealth@ucc.ie](mailto:schoolofpublichealth@ucc.ie)

### Programme inquiries:

email: [sphprogrammes@ucc.ie](mailto:sphprogrammes@ucc.ie)

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