



Issue 36 | April 2020

CoMH eNEWS

College of Medicine and Health, UCC



University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

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CoMH eNews is intended for circulation among staff and students of the College of Medicine and Health, UCC. Extracts from CoMH eNews should not be published without the permission of the editor.



Contact Tracing



Medical Staff Support



PPE Training



CoMH response



Virtual Visiting



Resource Centre





Dear Colleagues,

These are indeed extraordinary times for all of us as we come to grips with the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the last few weeks our lives have been transformed due to a concerted effort to 'flatten the curve'. Our colleagues in the health service have been working around the clock to prepare for a surge in cases. They have been like warriors preparing for battle, the front line of this battle being in ICU. The battleground though extends through the hospital and right into all our homes. We all have a part to play in meticulous attention to physical social distancing and avoiding cross contamination when we do venture out.

This crisis brings with it a great sadness, we all feel it, there is no escaping the devastating news of loss of life day after day around the world and on our own doorsteps. Worry about family, friends and colleagues is a constant. Yet there

is great hope too. It is gratifying to see front line professionals, many of them our valued colleagues, rally round and do what they can to prepare for the weeks ahead, secure supplies of PPE, set up contact tracing centres, develop training videos, disseminate high quality evidence and advice on how to treat patients and prevent virus transmission, manufacture reagent for testing, set up testing centres, gather supplies to support other centres, volunteer for testing or for administration or for data processing, the list is endless and is carried out with energy and camaraderie. Companies which have to cope with the transformation presented by this new reality have opened their stores to divert a supply of consumables and equipment to the front line. Our University has diverted equipment supplies and services that might be of help in dealing with this emergency as we have joined forces with the health service to work as one indomitable community. In the pages of this newsletter we are bringing you some examples of the many responses to the crisis by members of our community.

Our daily lives are profoundly impacted as we visit each other's homes in our on line meetings, our meetings expand to accommodate children and pets who provide intermittent welcome relief. My own empty nest is full again, all rooms are occupied as home offices, we are a

family by night and work colleagues during the day, it is a wonderful bonus to have their company. Working from home with movement limited to 2km brings its own stress though and we need to mind each other and indeed ourselves. There is a lot of advice out there about managing remote working. Things you take for granted such as the commute to and from work, coffee breaks, moving from one meeting to another, chance encounters between meetings and banter with colleagues provide us with short breaks, entertainment and stress relief. Working from home requires a different approach, our HR manager Niamh Healy suggests the following guidelines to help us:

- Schedule meetings to 25mins or 55mins to facilitate breaks between meetings. Meetings should not exceed 55 minutes where possible
- Block book time for lunch
- Take regular breaks
- Stretch and/or walk around
- Get some fresh air
- Set up your desk as per **ergonomic guidelines**

These are uncharted times, if you need timeout during a meeting to address a need at home, just say it.

I want to say a big thank you to you all for your hard work, commitment and persistence. In a very agile way

you have moved your teaching and assessment on line, many of you were involved in delivering the final medicine examinations with incredible speed and efficiency, more of you have been managing the rapidly changing landscape of student placements and others responding to the needs of students, staff and the HSE. It's far from over yet, we are living through an historic pandemic which I hope will soon be the stuff of memories and the history books.

Finally, congratulations to our final year medical students who are about to graduate, you will certainly never forget your last few months in UCC. I wish you well as you transition to your internship roles. While we will create a novel online conferring ceremony on Friday 17th at 3pm, we look forward to welcoming you back to UCC to celebrate your success in person at a point when social gatherings become the norm once again.

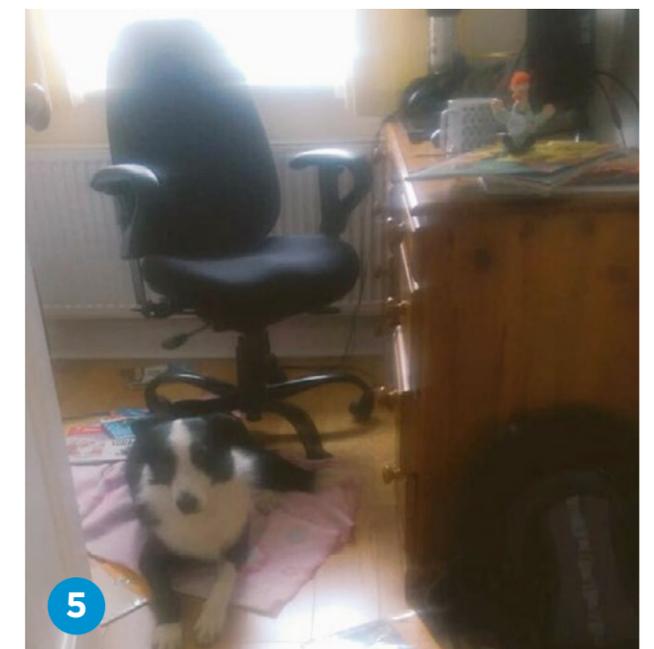
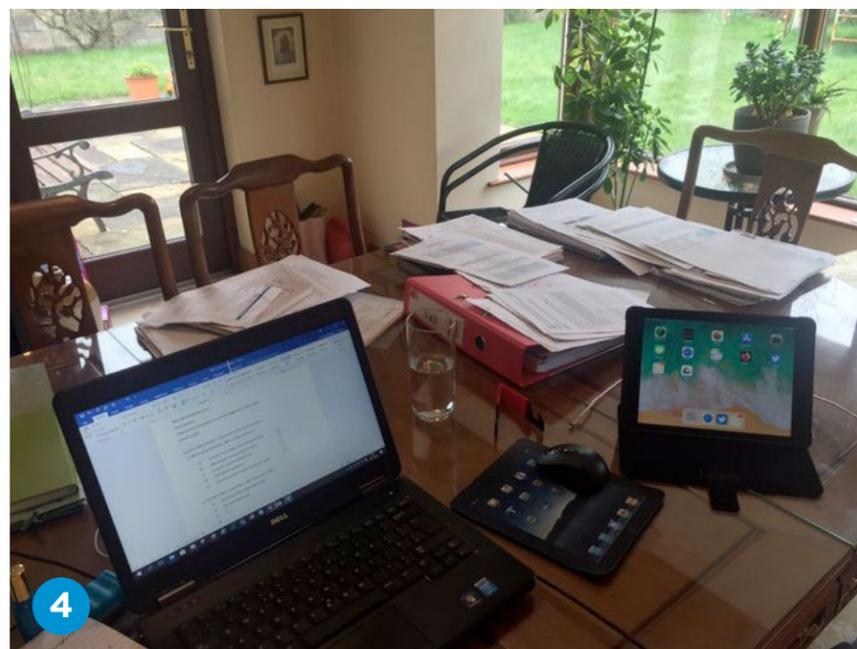
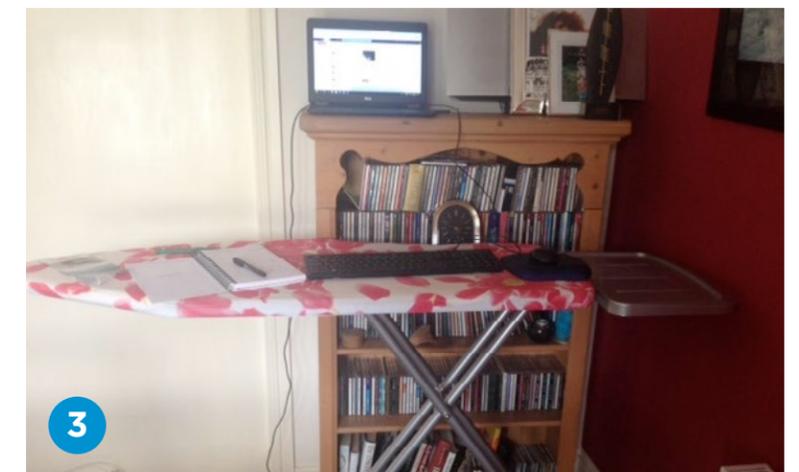
Stay well everyone and keep up the great work.

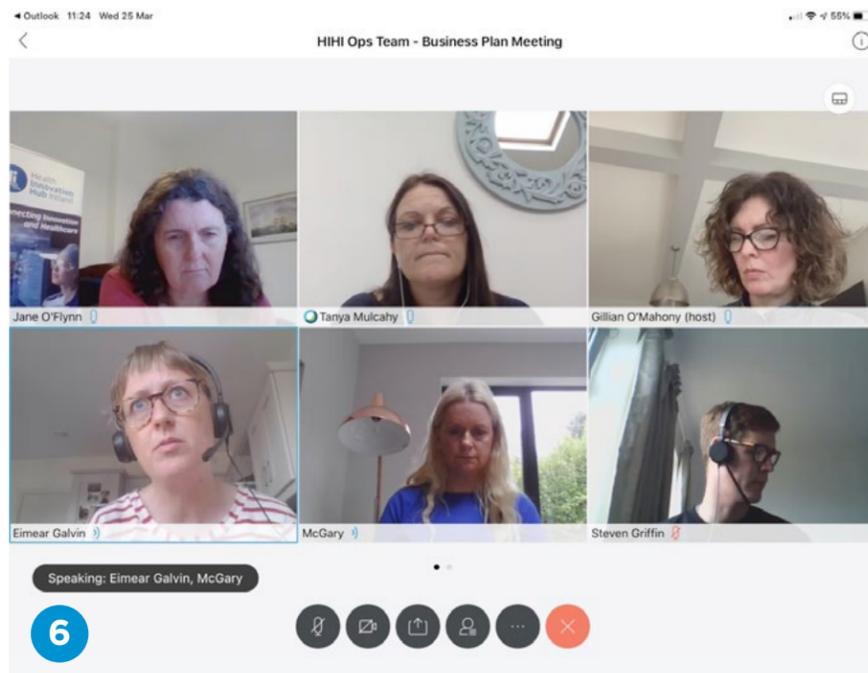
Professor Helen Whelton

Head of College
of Medicine and Health
University College Cork

College of Medicine and Health staff share their home working setups

1. Here is a photo of my fiancée, whom also works in UCC, trying to get some work done. Our Furbaby is likes to supervise to ensure we are not slacking!
Eric Lucking, Physiology
2. Working on @CochraneHeart reviews with some knitting from home.
Tamara Nihici, Alumnus
3. This is my standing desk - my ironing board and my screen at eye level on the bookshelves!
Eileen Barry, Clinical Therapies
4. Staying in touch, staying apart, staying at home.
Mairead Harding, Oral Health & Development
5. Some advantages when I #WorkFromHome include; friendly office buddy; natural light; greater selection of reading materials at my level.
Brendan Palmer, Public Health





6. HIHI team at work (screenshot of our team meeting), Cork, Dublin and Galway.

Colman Casey, HIHI

7. My 5 year old daughter Fia insisted that she wanted to work from home too! The upside of COVID-19 working from home!

Janas Harrington, Public Health

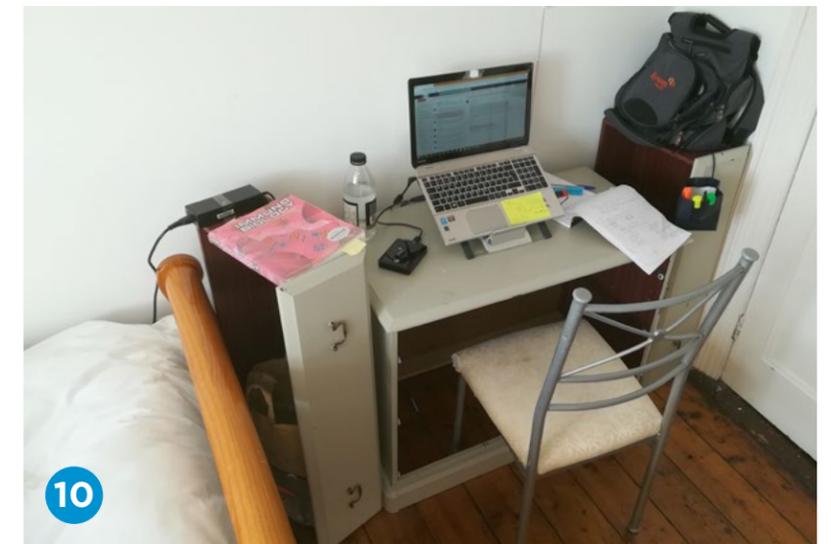
8. Ciara O'Toole,
Speech and Hearing Sciences

9. Cristiane Da Mata,
Dental School and Hospital

10. This repurposed chest of drawers looks tiny, however, is anything but uncomfortable and has made a huge difference to me when working from home, it's everything I needed!

Ana Ramón, APC

11. Getting her started early!
Damien Drohan, Nursing & Midwifery



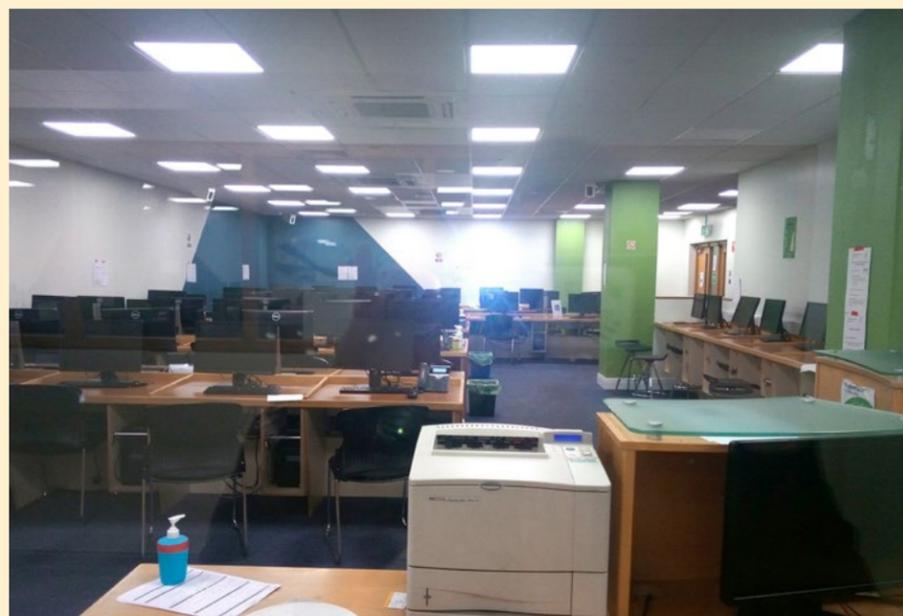
Above: Winning photo. Congratulations to Damien Drohan of the School of Nursing and Midwifery (and his daughter!), the winner of our 'Working from Home' photo competition!

ALL HANDS ON DECK



Above: Deirdre O'Keefe, SSWG.

Left: Boole turned into a Call Centre for contact tracing.



Above: Caroline Wudlow, volunteer, HSE, Ainsley Lyold, Geraldine Finn - all HSE.



Left: Head of School, Dr Christine McCreary with RGN staff Noleen Coffey and Katherine Morrissey Moran in the dental school at a training session for donning and doffing PPE.

UCC contact tracing centre 'firefighting' spread of COVID-19



Pictured above (l-r): Kathryn Neville, one of the organisational leads on behalf of UCC; Dr Martina Hayes, volunteer contact tracer, and Professor Ivan Perry, Professor of Public Health at UCC and one of the organisational leads on behalf of UCC. Also in picture are Dr Cliodhna Foley Nolan, (back centre) Public Health Specialist, and some of the contact tracers. Picture Denis Minihane

The Boole basement at University College Cork (UCC), has been transformed into a Call Centre for contact tracing in under a ten day period. Volunteers and UCC Academy staff are helping tackle the spread of COVID-19 by picking up the phone and methodically making their way through a national database. Sitting 2m apart, those staffing the phones are essentially “firefighting” the spread of Covid-19.

Ivan Perry, professor of public health at UCC commented “If you think of a fire breaking out in a forest, you’re attempting to contain it and put it out before it consumes the whole forest. The process of contact tracing is the way we can chase down this virus, hunt it down and ultimately break the chain of transmission or contagion,” he said.

UCC is one of a number of HSE contact-tracing centres around the country. Setting up a contact-tracing centre, which essentially looks and operates like a callcentre, at lightning speed, while taking into account social distancing, is no mean feat logistically.

Rooms that would once facilitate 50 people now must only sit 10, said Kathryn Neville, CoMH College Manager who is one of the organisational leads of the centre on behalf of UCC.



Swift and Effective Response made by CoMH to the COVID-19 National Effort

Pictured left: Head of the College of Public Health Professor Ivan Perry at the contact tracing centre in the Boole basement.

The College of Medicine and Health instantaneously responded to the COVID-19 national emergency with an all hands on deck mentality that swept right across the entire College with staff from every school involved in collaborating with the HSE, CUMH and government bodies in an effort to stem the spread of COVID-19 in Ireland. Courageous staff and students are giving their all volunteering in hospitals, contact centres and testing facilities and we as a College should be collectively extremely proud of our tremendous efforts.

Clinical Director Joe Eustace appeared on Virgin Media News this week giving positive news on new methods to detect COVID-19 on an early basis with trials taking place over the coming months looking at novel medications. He believes several of these treatments will demonstrate a beneficial effect. In other news Kathryn Neville, College Manager and Ivan Perry, Head of the School of Public Health have been busy managing the transformation of the Boole into a call centre. Elsewhere the School of Medicine has expedited the completion and assessment of final year MB (203 students) and is working with other Medical Schools, HSE and IMC to prepare and provide academic oversight for entry into Intern Grade Posts.

We have put together some shining examples from each School demonstrating their valiant and effective response to the COVID-19 national emergency. We cannot stress enough the importance, helpfulness and expediency of their actions in stemming the surge of COVID-19 in Ireland.

School of Medicine

The School of Medicine have made spaces available at Brookfield Health Sciences Complex to facilitate the provision of HSE Oncology Services for CUH and MUH. UCC-based scientists linked to national laboratory leads to optimise contributions to lab testing and supports on a national basis. Research facilitation is ongoing through CREC and CRF and the development of evidence-based guidelines and updates. Many School of Medicine staff are contributing to a University wide development of focussed research across many domains relevant to this disease. Through Medical Leader Forum, influencing the nature of research calls, collaborations and clinical trial participation. A number of local projects and contributions are already in development with the CREC. These are just some examples of the School of Medicine's outstanding response to the national emergency.

School of Public Health

We are also very grateful to and proud of our colleagues in the School of Public who are contributing to the work on tackling Covid-19, including those who are now on full time secondment as Public Health Physicians to the HSE Public Health Medicine Department, working with colleagues from other School in COMH on contact tracing, including those training contact tracers, those who have set up and are maintaining a nationally accessible online resource to support contact tracing.

A special mention also goes to those providing administrative support for the contact tracing training programme and call centre, those working with Occupational Health in Cork University Hospital to support contact tracing within the Hospital, other colleagues are providing infection control advice to the contact tracing call centre and the wider university. Colleagues working at local and national level on the dissemination of emerging evidence on the control of COVID-19 and evidence on the assessment and treatment of patients presenting with suspected and confirmed infection. A further group of colleagues are working to design COVID-19 related research that will inform our public health and clinical

strategies including work on a HRB funding application.

Ivan Perry's new role as coordinator of the UCC Contact Tracing Centre sees him working with Kathryn Neville, COMH Manager and Prof Eileen Savage, School of Nursing & Midwifery. We need to acknowledge the extraordinary level of support provided by the university at all levels, including support with administration, project management, IT, catering, cleaning, security and other services.

School of Clinical Therapies

In the School of Clinical Therapies staff are doing their utmost to get students graduated and into the workforce, having to pull students out of placements in all disciplines. Staff have, at very short notice, developed clinically-related work for students. They are also developing strategies for remote delivery of community services in e.g. SLT, OT and PHYS. Staff are on rosters for contact tracing, and training of contact tracers. Staff are also involved in the formation of a research cluster around social and policy countermeasures to Covid-19, specifically with an agenda targeting strategies targeting misinformation, stigma and fear. We would like to commend all on their inspirational collective efforts.

School of Nursing and Midwifery

In highlights from the School of Nursing and Midwifery to the emergency response to COVID-19 UCC is to support oncology day services (relocated from CUH and MUH), using CSSRC facility at the School of Nursing and Midwifery (SON&M) and has provided education

facilities for HSE contact tracing education. The Open access online CPD module has also been made available to support nurses in HSE intensive care units. The School has Loaned out a ventilator to CUH and IV training arms to the SIVUH. Research in support of the national emergency includes Prof Drennan leading a HRB application looking at impact of COVID-19 on healthcare staff. The School is also working on supporting an accelerated pathway to registration with NMBI for year 4 interns to register as nurses early. They deserve great recognition for their efforts.

Dental School

In the Dental School the following areas were allocated to the HSE with effect from 16th March for consultant led outpatient and nurse led outpatient clinics. They have also allocated for various clinical nurse specialists both working on the nurse led clinics and also their stroke support clinical nurse specialists. The Dental Hub (being used periodically for training of staff on ppe purposes), photographic room, Orthodontic side surgeries, Orthodontic admin office, Nursing station, Oral Surgery store rooms, Store room and Hot Spot desks have all been allocated to the HSE. A number of staff are working directly with the HSE voluntarily. Once again these are just a few highlights in the School's superb response to the COVID-19 emergency.

School of Pharmacy

The School of Pharmacy has supplied details of their PCR machines within the school to the HSE. Secure, flammable storage cabinets within the School are currently being used to store

large volumes of Ethanol and hand sanitizer that has being purchased by the University. They continue to deliver both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and continue to support our students who are members of the profession providing front line services. They will also be working with UCC in securing potentially manufacturing hand sanitizer in the coming weeks A number of staff have volunteered and were trained for contract tracing. Some staff are volunteering in HSE services; staff are supporting the 63 students on placement with community and hospital pharmacy departments. The School is also working with Colleague across UCC, regarding a HRB application looking at impact of COVID-19 on healthcare staff and students. The school has indeed made a tremendous response to the COVID-19 emergency.

We would like to thank most sincerely all our staff within the College for their enormous contribution, long hours and diligence to the national effort as can be seen from the above School's activities it is staggering how much everyone has contributed to the COVID-19 response. We shall see brighter days again in the future and for now must stay apart to work together.

‘Virtual’ visiting for NICU babies in CUMH

Cork University Maternity Hospital and UCC INFANT Centre have collaborated to provide virtual visiting for babies in the hospital’s neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). The new initiative allows families to remotely check-in on their baby amid COVID-19 visiting restrictions.

The safe and secure platform can be accessed at any time, from any device and is available at no cost to the parents. Staff record short video messages and updates of each baby which can then be sent directly to parents via the vCreate platform. It is simple to use and parents can easily create an account that is linked directly to their baby, allowing them to download videos to share with siblings, grandparents and other family members.

The system follows on from previous research work supported by Science Foundation Ireland. Parents such as Nicola Carey whose son is in the NICU have been using the virtual visitation platform to check on his progress. It is wonderful for her to see the progress he is making on a daily basis. It has also been amazing for the anxious grandparents to see him and know he is doing well.

Professor Gene Dempsey, Consultant Neonatologist at CUMH and Principal Investigator at INFANT, UCC, said: “This is a fantastic initiative which we hope will go some way to reducing the significant stress that parents are now facing. Whether it’s for a day or two admission, or indeed many months for our most immature babies, we believe this system, along with its educational material, will alleviate some of the worry that families face in these difficult times.”



Top picture: Families can remotely check-in on their baby amid COVID-19 visiting restrictions (photo: CUMH). **Bottom picture:** Staff record short video messages and updates of each baby.



Irish Scientists On Call

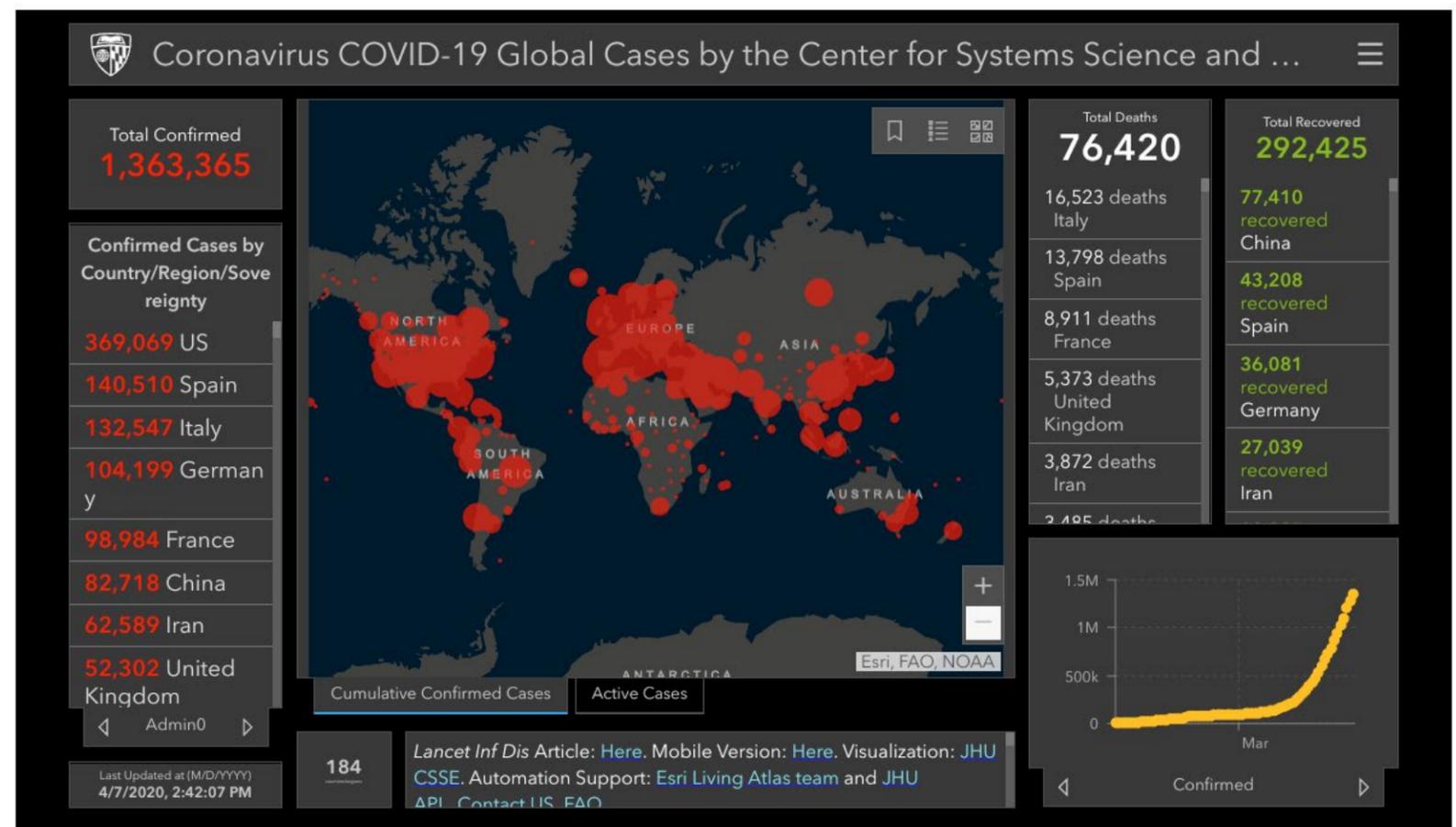
A Hub of Opportunity to join the COVID-19 Response

Irish scientists have set up a website where you can register your skills and look for opportunities to help the COVID-19 response: irishscientistsoncall.com

Opportunities to utilise your skillset in the COVID-19 response are listed on the website, and volunteers can get in touch with those seeking them directly.

To inform the organisers of any new initiatives for laboratory scientists and researchers, please contact scientistsoncall@gmail.com

UCC COVID-19 Resource Centre



UCC COVID-19 Resources Centre Keeps HSE and UCC Communities in the Loop

An online one stop shop resource centre has been set up on the UCC Courses website to collate reputable resources and keep front line workers, academics and other interested parties abreast of the latest reliable information and developments regarding COVID-19. The page, which can be accessed by clicking [HERE](#), features a live map of worldwide COVID-19 cases, as well as educational material for staff redeployed to ICU, resources to support

evidence-based practice, a live recording of the basic ICU course run by Dr Robert Plant and Dr Ivan Hayes of CUH on March 13th, and a wealth of other valuable resources.

The College wishes to express its collective gratitude for the hard work and dedication of Dr Paul Beirne, David Power, Uwe Schiller and Dr Dorothy Breen in setting up and maintaining this invaluable source of information.

COVID-19 Remote Early Warning System (CREW) to Provide Early Detection for Frontline Medical Staff



The purpose of the COVID-19 Remote Early Warning System (CREW) is to remotely identify healthcare staff who may be developing a temperature, which is possibly symptomatic of COVID-19, and who therefore should not present to work. COVID-19 Remote Early Warning System (CREW) combines existing technologies in an innovative way to allow early detection of symptoms of the Coronavirus.

At a high level the system architecture consists of:

- A Wearable Digital Thermometer to measure core body temperature
- A Sensor Platform e.g. smartphone, smartwatch or wearable IoT device.
- A Monitoring Platform on which to receive information from the devices.

CREW is developed by 8 West Consulting, based on its SafeTrx tracking and alerting software platform. Development and testing of the system is currently underway in Cork, and the system will be tested in a clinical setting next week.

Key Collaborators include Professor Barry O'Reilly, Director of Assert, Clinical Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, UCC. Dr Patrick Henn, ASSERT, UCC, Director Research and Education, Professor Stephen Cusack, Professor of Emergency Medicine, UCC.

Dr Paul Galvin, Head of the ICT for Health Programmes and Head of the Life Sciences Interface Group at the Tyndall National Institute. John Murphy, CEO, 8 West Consulting, Eamonn Franklin, CEO, 8 West Consulting, Anders Stormberg, Head of Wearable Platform Development, Sony Network Communications Europe and Mark Rainford, Program Director, 8 West Consulting.

Project Status is to commence feasibility concept trialling in CUH Emergency Department plan on the 3rd April 2020.

Online Resources for Staying Entertained at Home

FOR KIDS

- PE with Joe Wicks on Youtube. Every weekday at 9am. Previous workouts can be viewed on Joe's channel.
- Storytime with David Walliams. Every day at 11am on his website.
- Stuck at Home Science, a series on science experiments which can be done at home. Weekdays at 6pm on their website.
- Themed Dance Classes with Oti Mabuse of Strictly Come Dancing, every day at 11:30am. Oti shares themed dance routines from Harry Potter, the Minions, Moana, and more on her Facebook page.
- Live Farm Webcam at Folly Farm. "Now you can spy on a sheep or gaze at a goat all day long" with this live feed from Folly Farm.

FOR ADULTS

- Tour the Guggenheim or the National Gallery from the comfort of your couch with this collection of virtual gallery and museum tours from the Guardian.
- Visit the TedTalks Youtube page to learn something new.
- Try out the Chrome extension Netflix Party to binge your favourite shows with friends and family - while staying apart.



Above: Oti Mabuse of Strictly Come Dancing.

SHARING THE NEWS Communicating with Parents and Families



Pictured above: The UCC Audiology team (Dr Amr El Refaie, Dr Siobhán Laoide-Kemp, Teresa O'Rourke and Ellie Sweeney), Gwen Carr (UK), Dr Gary Norman (HSE), Laura Grant and Rachel Broderick (Our New Ears) with participants from Ireland and Egypt on the first Irish CPD course "Sharing the News: Communicating with Parents and Families".

For the very first time in Ireland, this Irish audiology course with an international appeal was launched in UCC on the 10th and 11th December 2019. It was based on Gwen Carr's highly successful course Supporting and empowering families through effective communication - Sharing the News which has been delivered in the UK since 2005.

The HSE Community Audiology Services fully funded the course aimed at Audiologists who work in the paediatric services. Hosted by the Department of Speech & Hearing Sciences, the course provided participants with opportunities to develop an understanding of the importance of effective communication with parents and families.

This course was innovative in a number of ways:

- It included a collaboration with the charity Our New Ears (ONE).
- It gave participants hands on practice in group settings with professional actors.
- Pre-recorded interviews with parents viewed in small group settings were used effectively as learning tools.
- International participants brought valuable perspectives by their participation.

Participants gained:

- An understanding of the varied ways in which parents adjust and adapt to their child's diagnosis.
- A greater understanding of the key elements of effective listening and information sharing in clinical encounters.
- Opportunities to develop strategies for effective and responsive communication in challenging situations.

Gwen Carr's keynote presentation "Sharing The News: Empowering Families Through Effective Communication" was warmly and enthusiastically received. An interactive presentation from Parents from Our New Ears also proved popular and highly successful. In their feedback participants commented on the "buzz" and the enthusiastic atmosphere which facilitated learning and networking.

The organisers look forward to running this course again and meeting more audiologists from Ireland and abroad who are passionate about sharing the news and communicating effectively with parents and families.



School of Medicine Prize-giving Ceremony 2019

The annual School of Medicine Prize-Giving Ceremony took place on Friday 22 November 2019 in Brookfield Health Sciences Complex.

The Dean of the School, Professor Paula O'Leary welcomed the prizewinners, their families and friends to the Ceremony. The Dean also had a warm welcome for the family and friends of deceased family members and past graduates of the University to the Ceremony.

On behalf of the School Professor O'Leary congratulated the recipients of the Prizes who have excelled across a broad range of disciplines at various stages of their academic studies. The Dean noted that as well as University and School Prizes many of the students and recent graduates have been recognised by external bodies, notably the NUI Dr Henry Hutchinson Stewart prizewinners and RCPI prizewinner, Dr John David Kehoe. Dr JD Kehoe was awarded the Reuben Harvey Prize at RCPI in recognition of his first place ranking in UCC Graduating Class of 2019.



Above and left: Some of the prizewinners pictured with Professor Paula O'Leary, Head of the School of Medicine.



Above and right: Some more of the prizewinners pictured with Professor Paula O'Leary, Head of the School of Medicine.



Many School of Medicine students continue to excel in a wide range of research activities and their commitment was acknowledged at the ceremony. Harsha Daswani and Aileen O'Mahony were awarded a Health Research Board Summer Student Scholarship this year, and Aoife Jones Thachuthara, Samuel Keogh, Natalie Krakoski, Eimear O'Mahony, Samantha Wakerlin and Ruth Mook-Hay Yan each received a bursary under the 2019 UCC College of Medicine and Health SURE Scheme.

Professor O'Leary emphasised that student life extends beyond the lecture halls and clinics and pointed out that many of the medical students have been formally recognised for their substantial contributions to University Societies. In particular, Professor O'Leary was very pleased to highlight the many successes of MedSoc, Surgeon Noonan, Friends of MSF and Emergency Care Society in the past twelve months and welcomed representatives from these societies to the ceremony. On behalf of the School, the Dean acknowledged their involvement and participation in these important aspects of their students' lives and wished them well in their future endeavours.

Professor O'Leary emphasised how proud the School is of the achievements of the medical students who received prizes. On behalf of the School, the Dean thanked sponsors for their continuing support for a number of prizes and awards.



Effective Communication Masterclasses

In January 2020, two Masterclasses which focused on how clinicians and educators can manage emotionally charged clinical consultations, through the teaching of effective communication strategies, were held in the College of Medicine and Health. These were facilitated by Professor Peter Martin, Professor of Clinical Communication & End-of-Life Care, and Meg Chiswel, Deputy Director from the Centre for Organisational Change in Person Centred Health Care, Deakin University, Australia. The first Masterclass focused on how to run family meetings in relation to end of life and advance care planning. The second day provided educators and clinicians with the opportunity to practice advanced communication skills using simulation and clinical vignettes. The Masterclasses were organised by Dr Caroline Dalton, Dr Elaine Lehane, and Dr Colm O'Tuathaigh, in conjunction with the All Ireland Institute of Hospice and Palliative Care. Feedback from participants was very positive and respondents indicated that the masterclasses facilitated the development of practical skills in this area.

Pictured above (l-r): Professor Peter Martin, Dr Nicola Cornally, (School of Nursing and Midwifery, SONM) Karen Charnley (AIHPC), Dr Caroline Dalton (School of Nursing and Midwifery, SONM) and Meg Chiswel.

Pictured left, back row (l-r): Professor Peter Martin, Dr Colm O'Tuathaigh, (School of Medicine), Meg Chiswel, Dr Caroline Dalton and Dr Elaine Lehane (School of Nursing and Midwifery, SONM) and front rows, Masterclass participants.

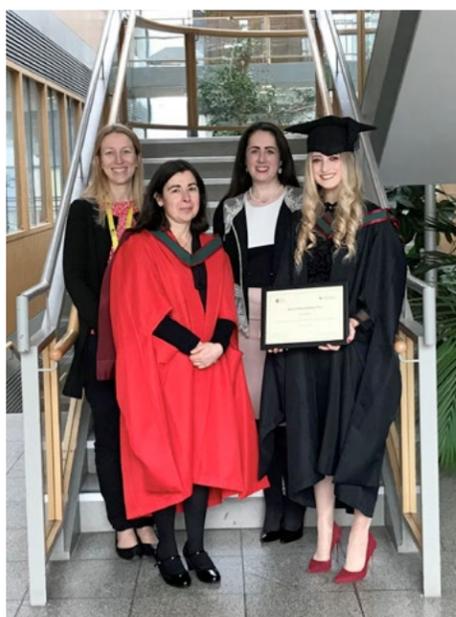




MSc Clinical Pharmacy Conferings

Congratulations to the MSc Clinical Pharmacy graduates, who celebrated their achievement at the spring conferring ceremony on Friday 21st February 2020. Amy Byrne received the prize for achieving the highest aggregate score in the class of 2017 - 2019.

The MSc Clinical Pharmacy is currently accepting applications for the September 2020 intake. For more information click [HERE](#)



Pictured above (l-r): Back row: Dorthe Jacobsen, Jayne Kelleher, Clodagh Dolan, Amy Byrne, Aoife O'Reilly, Isabel Brady, Anna Cronin. Front row: Janice Mansfield, Ruth Loftus, Maria Ambros, Dr Teresa Barbosa, Dr Suzanne McCarthy, Julie Corcoran, Maria O'Connor, Maura O'Connor. Missing from the picture: Maedhbh Flannery, Claire Hanlon, Maria Hegarty, Sergio Martin, Farhaad Moolla, Eilis Rahill. Congratulations to Donna Martin who graduated with a Post Graduate Diploma in Clinical Pharmacy.

Pictured left (l-r): Dr Suzanne McCarthy, Dr Teresa Barbosa, Dr Maria Donovan, Amy Byrne.



UCC Students Reach Finals of International 'SIMWars' Competition

On November 5th and 6th 2019, 5 UCC medical students travelled to Belfast to compete in an international simulation competition in acute medicine at the 2019 Association for Simulation Practice in Healthcare conference. The five students that comprised the 'Maple Syrup Squad' were Ryan Sless, Nathaniel Hayward, Tommy Kirkham, Shawn Albers, and Niki Tellios. These students helped to pioneer UCC's own SimWars competition and were vital in the organisation of both the 2019 and 2020 National SimWars competitions.

The team trained extensively with multi-disciplinary faculty, to recognise and manage any acute medicine simulation scenarios that could emerge during the contest.

On day one of the competition, in the Waterfront Conference Hall in Belfast, cheered on by UCC and CUH colleagues, the team expertly managed a case of neutropenic sepsis, and subsequently advanced to the final following a pulmonary embolism simulation. The 'squad' were the only medical students to advance to the final, and narrowly lost to a team with several years of emergency department experience. The College is very proud of the Maple Syrup Squad for advancing to the final of an international competition and we look forward to the next crop of competitors that will emerge at this year's National SimWars competition in March.

Groundbreaking new clinics to support women with devastating cancer treatment side effects



A ground-breaking new initiative by the Irish Cancer Society will support women who are struggling with the life-changing side effects of cancer treatment.

The new Women's Health Initiative will see clinics established in Dublin and Cork aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of female cancer survivors. These clinics have been created in close consultation with patients who are often suffering devastating side effects from cancer treatment such as sexual dysfunction, fatigue and psychological issues.

One such woman is Anne Nally-Keenan, who was 29-years-old and 29 weeks pregnant when she was diagnosed with cervical cancer in 2012. After delivering her first child, Anne went through intensive treatment for her cancer. Eight years and over a dozen surgeries later, Anne still lives with the after effects of her diagnosis.

"I've come through the fight of my life with cancer, but every day I still have to live with incredibly challenging symptoms from my treatment. Issues like early menopause and infertility are not things a woman in her 30s should have to go through, but this programme will be really useful to women in a similar position to myself," Anne said.

Building on the best existing international expertise, the specialist nurse-led clinics will offer a range of supports, from referrals to specialist services and tailored treatment plans to under-appreciated aspects of survivorship including physical activity and diet.

Commenting on the Women's Health Initiative, Irish Cancer Society Chief Executive Averil Power said: "The stories we hear from some women survivors on the side effects they endure after cancer treatment are heart-breaking. From intimacy issues to crippling fatigue there are so many ways in which these women are being impacted.

"Through this initiative we now have an opportunity to really help these women manage their side effects and live better lives," she added.

The clinics, led at Cork University Hospital by Medical Oncologist Professor Roisin Connolly of UCC and by UCD Professor of Gynaecology Donal Brennan across sites at the Mater and St Vincent's hospitals in Cork and Dublin respectively, and supported by the National Maternity Hospital, will run on a pilot basis for two years commencing in 2020.

Recruitment of patients for the clinics will

take place over the coming months, and it is hoped that the pilot scheme will eventually lead to the roll-out of a national programme for cancer survivors. An online tool developed with the clinics will also be available to women around the country regardless of their location.

The programme is the result of an €890,000 investment by a consortium including the Irish Cancer Society, the HSE, The Mater Private Hospital, the National Cancer Control Programme, Breakthrough Cancer Research, the National Maternity Hospital Foundation and Pfizer Ireland.





Launch of the 2020 GatewayUCC SPRINT Accelerator Programme

Pictured left (l-r): William Scanlon, Tyndall; Anita Maguire, VP Research and Innovation; President of UCC, Patrick G O'Shea; Myriam Cronin, Head of GatewayUCC; Helen Whelton, Head of CoMH; and Rich Ferrie, Director of UCC Innovation.

Gateway UCC launched its fourth SPRINT Accelerator Programme 2020 recently in the Western Gateway Building in UCC. The SPRINT Accelerator Programme is designed to support early stage start-ups working on technologies generated in UCC by UCC researchers and entrepreneurs. President Professor Patrick O'Shea officially launched the programme on Friday 31st January. The keynote speaker was Sean O'Sullivan, Managing Partner, SOSV. GatewayUCC, part of UCC Innovation, supports researcher led start-ups and spin out companies has announced that the companies it has worked with have created 370 jobs since 2012. GatewayUCC is part of UCC Innovation. In that time these GatewayUCC supported companies have raised over €40 million of public and private investment, supporting 60 start-ups. These IP based company

have contributed more than €22 million a year in salaries to the local economy. Also in attendance was Helen Whelton, Head of the CoMH, Anita Maguire, VP Research and Innovation, William Scanlon, Tyndall and Rich Ferrie, UCC Innovation Director

The SPRINT Programme has been developed to help spin-out start-up companies overcome challenges they may encounter when starting their businesses. On the programme, pre and early stage start-ups will be working with successful business mentors who will help to bring their business from idea stage through to the eventual commercialisation of the product or service. The SPRINT programme is sponsored by Enterprise Ireland, Bank of Ireland and Cork City LEO.

Manager of GATEWAY UCC, Myriam Cronin said: "We are very excited to launch the SPRINT 2020 Programme. The Programme now in its fourth year has proved to be a huge success for UCC and we are looking forward to building and growing the next wave of Intellectual Property based companies. We envisage ten participants on each course and projects nearest to market readiness will be chosen. Each participant will be assigned a mentor with start up experience in their areas."

The Programme will be delivered in 20 modules over an eight month period. At the end of the Programme the participants should have a business plan and road map strategy for developing their business over the first year or two of existence.

Congratulations to renowned Professor JP Corridan on his Milestone 100th Birthday!



Heartfelt congratulations to esteemed Professor JP Corridan on his milestone 100th birthday, a cause for tremendous celebrations. He is pictured on this landmark birthday with his daughters Mary Pat and Candy. Professor JP Corridan was born on the 16th of March, 1920 in Listowel. He is the youngest of four children, one brother is a priest and he has a brother and sister who are qualified doctors. Conferred in 1945 from UCD he received a Diploma in Public health in 1948.

His first post was St Vincent's on the green followed by a number of positions in the UK. He returned to Cork to take up a public health post in the City hall at the height of the TB outbreak. He married his devoted wife Patricia in 1957 who sadly passed away in 2014. He took up a post in UCC in the early 1960s as lecturer in Public

health and was subsequently appointed professor of social and preventive medicine (Epidemiology) at UCC until his retirement in 1987 at the age of 67.

Professor Corridan had a wonderful reputation amongst his students as being an honourable, direct and witty man who always took a roll call at the start of every lecture so that he could put faces on names. His 100th birthday celebrations were very much curtailed at his request due to covid 19 but it was still a fantastic day. He is an avid reader of every subject following Irish and international news closely and enjoys listening to the classical music of Brahms, Listz and Rackmaninov amongst others. He lives at home supported by his two daughters MaryPat and Candy and attributes his longevity to God's providence.

Dr Dorothy Breen and Professor George Shorten awarded funding for new Patient Safety Research Project PROTECT



Above: Dr Dorothy Breen.

Dr Dorothy Breen and Professor George Shorten of the Department of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Care Medicine, with the support of the Clinical Research Facility-Cork, have been awarded €280,000 jointly by the HRB and

HSE to fund a patient safety research project entitled PROTECT. The Research Collaborative in Quality and Patient Safety (RCQPS) award is intended to promote research in quality and patient safety in healthcare. PROTECT aims to determine the effectiveness of an interdisciplinary, outcomes-based, team training programme for Safety Huddle performance in decreasing the incidence of patient adverse events. The study will be conducted in Cork University Hospital and University Hospital Waterford.



In Between Two Minds Pharmacy Conference

On Wednesday 29th January UCC Pharmacy Society, SÁMH Society and the School of Pharmacy hosted a mental health conference in Devere Hall titled “In Between Two Minds”. The well-attended conference included presentation from key-note speakers Dr Yvonne Nolan and Dr Eithne Hunt, and covered the mental health of healthcare professionals and healthcare students as well as patients’ mental health and associapharmaceutical and medical aspects of mental healthcare conditions, and the role of healthcare professionals in their management.



South Intern Network Interns win awards

South Intern Network Interns Dr Haleeda Hilmi and Dr Bryan Traynor won prizes for their projects at the recent Royal Academy for Medicine Ireland Intern Study Day.

Pictured left: Dr Hilmi (first on left, back row) and Dr Traynor (third from right, front row) pictured with the other award winners.

Dr Karthik Srinivasan awarded HSE Open Access Researcher of the Year Award

Dr Karthik Srinivasan of the Department of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Care Medicine recently received the HSE Open Access Researcher of the Year 2019 award from Ms Ana Terres, Deputy National Director HSE. The award, made jointly with Professor George Shorten, was based on Dr Srinivasan's work

on proficiency based progression training in epidural placement at Cork University Maternity Hospital. An article by Dr Srinivasan on this work can be seen in full here.

Pictured right: Dr Karthik Srinivasan presented with the award by Ms Ana Terres, Head of Research and Development & Assistant National Director, HSE.



Work on the MINDUP project underway following successful funding application by School of Public Health

The School of Public Health in conjunction with the National Suicide Research Foundation was successful in securing highly competitive Horizon2020 funding of 4.3 Million Euros for 4 years. The proposal reached the highest score of over 140 applications. The project will break new ground in mental health promotion at the workplace by combining the expertise of mental health, occupational health, work psychology, public health and implementation science researchers and practitioners.

The H2020 MINDUP (Mental Health Promotion and Intervention in Occupational Settings) project is being co-ordinated in UCC by Professor Ella Arensman (PI) and Dr Birgit Greiner. The MINDUP Consortium met for its first project meeting in UCC on 9th and 10th January 2020 with an impressive turnout of 37 participants. The consortium, involving 17 international partners in 15 countries in Europe and Australia, discussed the approaching work packages, milestones and desired impact of MINDUP to develop, implement and evaluate various (online) interventions and training materials.

The primary aim of MINDUP is to improve mental health and wellbeing in the workplace by developing, implementing and evaluating a multilevel intervention targeting to prevent mental health difficulties and to promote wellbeing in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the construction, health and ICT sectors. The secondary aim is to reduce depression and suicidal behaviour.

Considering the short-term and long-term impacts of COVID-19 on companies, including increased stress related depression and anxiety among staff, participation in the MINDUP project is timely and relevant while the MINDUP intervention tools have a specific focus on alleviating depression and anxiety among staff.



Pictured right: MINDUP consortium partners pictured with Professor Patrick O'Shea, President of UCC and Professor Anita Maguire, Vice-President of Research, UCC.

Dr Sheena McHugh is Awarded One of Five Research Leader Awards from the HRB



psychology from University College Dublin and MSc in health psychology from University College London. She joined UCC in 2007 to undertake the HRB-funded PhD Scholars programme in Health Services Research, now known as SPHeRE.

Sheena's research focuses on barriers and facilitators to implementing evidence-based practices, and designing, tailoring and assessing the effectiveness of strategies to improve implementation in healthcare settings.

The Health Research Board (HRB) investment of 7.5 million euros will support five new research leaders to conduct research programmes that will deliver evidence to directly inform changes in health policy and practice. Each research leader has developed strong partnerships with different parts of the health sector and will include public and patient perspectives in their work.

Dr Sheena McHugh is one of the five Research Leaders and is a Health Services Researcher and Lecturer in the School of Public Health in UCC. Sheena obtained her degree in

With the Research Leader Award from the HRB, Sheena will develop a national hub for implementation research in Ireland and build much-needed capacity among researchers and practitioners through training and network-building activities. Sheena will work with international experts, national partners in the HSE and Slaintecare Implementation Programme Office, as well as local collaborators including health professionals at Cork-Kerry Community Healthcare, Professor Corina Naughton from UCC's School of Nursing and Dr Aileen Murphy at Cork University Business School.



Students across the College team up for Health Fusion Team Challenge

On February 28th 2020, four final year students, each from different schools within the CoMH, represented UCC in the Health Fusion Team Challenge, an interdisciplinary team-based intervarsity event which took place in Trinity College Dublin. As part of the challenge, the team members had to share their expertise and work together in the weeks leading up to the event to deliver a presentation on the day describing how their interdisciplinary team would manage a complex oesophageal cancer patient case.

Although the UCC team did not win the event on the day, they put in a fantastic performance

and enjoyed their experience. The team this year was brought together by Dr Kieran Dalton and Dr Margaret Bermingham of the School of Pharmacy, and it is likely that UCC will be recruiting once again next year for healthcare students interested in getting the opportunity to participate in this interdisciplinary team challenge.

Pictured above (l-r):

Kathryn Lesko (Medicine), Rachel O'Donoghue (Dentistry), Eoin Hurley (Pharmacy), Sarah Duxbury (Speech & Language Therapy).



UCC Philanthropy Impact Awards 2020

March 5th marked the inaugural Philanthropy Impact Awards, which were held in the Aula Maxima on campus. The event celebrated the generosity of various alumni, foundations, corporates and friends of the university who have made significant contributions to its growth over the years.

The recipients of the awards were educational charity the Lauritzson Foundation, medical devices company Boston Scientific, and UCC graduate Professor Tony O'Brien, Consultant Physician in Palliative Medicine, Marymount University Hospital and Hospice.

Pictured above: Professor Helen Whelton, Head of the College of Medicine and Health, pictured with Sean Gayer Vice President of Operations at Boston Scientific.

Pictured left: Awardee Professor Tony O'Brien, Consultant Physician in palliative medicine, pictured with Professor John O'Halloran, Deputy President and Registrar at UCC.

Photos: Clare Keogh

Launch of new national undergraduate curriculum for future healthcare professionals to support patients in self-management of chronic health conditions

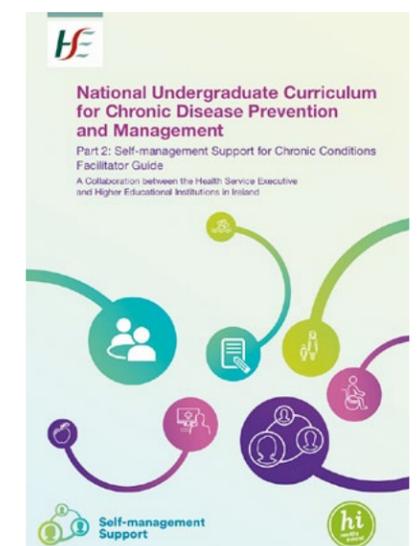


Pictured above: Members of UCC and HSE project team at the launch.
Front row (l-r): Dr Carmel Mulaney, HSE lead on Self-management support; Ms Laura Magahy, Executive Director, Slaintecare; Professor Eileen Savage, School of Nursing & Midwifery and Chair of National Working Group.
Back row (l-r): Ms Dawn Sinclair, National Project Manager and School of Nursing & Midwifery; Ms Anna O'Leary, School of Nursing & Midwifery; Ms Breda Good, Patient representative, Asthma Ireland; Ms Selena Han Eunjin, Research Assistant, School of Nursing & Midwifery; Ms Geraldine Daly, Lecturer, School of Clinical Therapies; Ms Carol Condon, Lecturer, School of Nursing & Midwifery.

A new national undergraduate curriculum aimed at preparing future healthcare professionals to support patients in the self-management of chronic health conditions was recently launched by Ms Laura Magahy, Executive Director of the Slaintecare Programme Implementation. The development of this curriculum on Self Management Support for Chronic Conditions involved a collaboration between all healthcare disciplines across all Higher Education Institutes in Ireland (HEIs) and the Health Service Executive (HSE), specifically, the Health and Wellbeing Division. The project was led by UCC with Professor Eileen Savage of the School of Nursing & Midwifery as Chair of the National Working Group and Ms Dawn Sinclair of the School of Nursing & Midwifery as Project Manager. At the launch Ms Magahy said that “this is another positive step forward in implementing the government’s Slaintecare policy relating to integrated care and person centred services. There are a number of initiatives identified as part of the implementation of Slaintecare relating to self-management

support, these include self-management support as part of routine care as part of the GP GMS chronic disease contract extension, and the funding of self-management programmes through the Slaintecare integration fund.” Professor Savage who also spoke at the launch said that, “The collaborative alignment between the HSE and the HEIs in developing this curriculum is an exciting feature of the development of this national curriculum because it has brought educationalists and policy makers together with a shared goal for better healthcare in the management of chronic conditions.”

The curriculum can be accessed by clicking [HERE](#)





MedSoc runs Teddy Bear Hospital 2020

MedSoc ran their annual Teddy Bear Hospital 24th - 26th February in Devere Hall. Staff from the School of Medicine paid a visit to assist with the aim of the event, which is intended to destigmatize the medical environment in the eyes of young children and to introduce them to a healthcare setting in a fun and relaxed manner. On 24th February MedSoc specifically welcomed children with special needs and TG4 attended on 25th when students from Gael Scoil were in attendance. Over 1,000 junior and senior infant pupils attended the "hospital" in Devere Hall over the three days and spades of fun was had by all.

Running for Seanad and Getting Married!



Pictured above: Angela with her husband David O'Connell on their wedding day.

Photo: Deirdre O'Connell

Dr Angela Flynn, lecturer in the School of Nursing and Midwifery had a busy month in March. She has been running an election campaign as well as planning her wedding! Dr Flynn was delighted to have received a nomination from the Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT) to be a candidate on the Cultural and Educational Panel for the Seanad elections. This is one of the five vocational panels that supply 43 of the 60 seats in the upper house.

The Seanad election is very complex and has received much critique of its representativeness. “Undoubtedly there is a need for Seanad reform” said Dr Flynn, “and I understand from a number of incumbent Senators that they have worked on a reform Bill that is prepared and ready to be enacted”.

Dr Flynn, the current President of IFUT and a member of the Governing Body of UCC, has established her electoral platform on issues relating to the proper funding of Higher Education, widening access to Higher Education, and a number of other Social Justice matters. “To achieve our full potential as the only English-speaking country in the EU, we must make sure all our young people have access to a properly funded higher education system”.

Angela believes that we also need to enable fuller integration of students from migrant and refugee families with a wider range of positive measures, “I am involved in supporting refugees and asylum seekers through the Sanctuary Runners movement since shortly after its inception, and as a mentor in UCC’s Sanctuary Scholarship scheme. As a Senator I would work to bring forward a range of positive measures to

both assist restoration of adequate state funding for third level, and address key issues related to educational access, housing, and equality of access to health care”, Angela said.

Electioneering had to take a backseat while Angela prepared to get married to her long term partner David O'Connell. She knew they were pushing their luck by picking Friday 13th for their big day, but when the COVID19 situation got more and more serious they were concerned that they might have to cancel. However as it was a small event, in a large airy venue (St Peters on North Main street), they were okay to go ahead. “Just under thirty people had to pull out because they had concerns about attending due to their own condition, or were looking after someone else who was vulnerable” said Angela. “I totally understand their decisions and we might just have to have another celebration for everyone when this has all blown over!. It was hard to practice social distancing at such a happy time when all you wanted to do was hug and kiss all your family and friends!”.

The Seanad election campaign has had to be managed alongside other priorities while Angela has been involved in contact tracing with the Occupational Health Dept in the CUH. Additionally, she has sought out refresher courses so as to get her clinical knowledge and practices back up to speed as she anticipates supporting her clinical colleagues as the pressure mounts in the hospitals. “Given that I have a background in critical care nursing, I feel it is only right to be ready to help out when the levels of critically ill patients start to rise”. The honeymoon will have to wait for another time! For more on Angela’s campaign see www.angelaflynn.ie

Minister Jim Daly launches the new MSc Hearing Balance and Communication Programme in Brookfield, UCC



Pictured above: Mr Jim Daly, Minister for Mental Health and Older People, Professor Helen Whelton, Head of College of Medicine and Health, UCC, Dr Peter O'Sullivan ENT surgeon South Infirmary, Professor Nicole Muller, Head of Clinical Therapies, UCC, Dr Siobhan Laoide-Kenp and Dr Nicola Bessell, School of Clinical Therapies.

Ireland's only education degree that examines the challenges faced by people with hearing and balance difficulties, was launched Feb 3rd at University College Cork (UCC), by the Minister for Mental Health and Older People, Jim Daly. Balance is the number one reason over 65's visit their GP.

The MSc Hearing Balance and Communication programme, was developed by the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences in the School of Clinical Therapies at UCC, and provides opportunities to acquire state of the art knowledge and skills in the field of hearing and balance related difficulties. A mission of the programme is to engage professionals from diverse backgrounds in expanding and progressing their own professional capacities with the goal of contributing to improved care for patients and their families. A unique focus of the degree is on communication across the lifespan and how it is influenced by hearing loss.

This new MSc provides an opportunity for continuing postgraduate education to professionals from Health and Education who already work closely together delivering child and adult services across the country. Students will learn in a collaborative environment, which will contribute to future co-operation between disciplines in the field of work. An innovative MSc,

it offers a multidisciplinary approach to hearing and balance disorders and the challenges to communication across the lifespan. The course is open to ENT surgeons, Speech and Language Therapists, Teachers of the Deaf, GPs, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists and Nurses who wish to broaden their knowledge base.

This degree will enhance and the skills of Ireland's health professionals in this area. The resulting opportunities for career progression and retention are much needed within the existing diverse workforce that provides hearing and balance related care in Ireland.

UCC is uniquely placed to provide this service given the multidisciplinary expertise amongst its staff. UCC provides the only education programme in clinical audiology in Ireland and this new programme will build on its success, which includes extensive experience in CPD for practising Audiologists. The School of Clinical Therapies encompasses 5 different disciplines (Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Radiography, Physiotherapy and Audiology) providing a unique setting to present ample opportunities and expertise for inter-professional learning.



INTERVIEW

Dr James O'Mahony

Course/subjects studied in
University College Cork:

**Dip/ BSc Psychiatric Nursing
(2002/2004)**

**Masters of Business Administration (MBA)
(2016)**

**PhD Medicine & Health
(2015)**

What is your best memory of your time at UCC?

There have been so many great memories in UCC. From the friends I made to the different degrees I was fortunate enough to study here over the years. A memory that stands out in my mind was a field trip to Italy with my MBA class. There we learned about the automotive (I love cars so I loved seeing the performance cars) and ceramic business while also enjoying Italy and socialising with the class. It was a turning point in how I understood work and balancing work with living life. I remember reflecting on this on a terrace in Bologna with the sun shining down on us over a glass of wine. We were discussing the importance of doing what drives us and enriches our life while also living our life and attending to important relationships with family, friends, colleagues and our community. This led to a change in job which turned out to be much more engaging and rewarding for me.

How has your time at UCC helped you to get to where you are now?

My time in UCC has most definitely shaping the life path I have taken. I talk above about how it is important for me to work at something that is engaging and enriching. I am aware that my education in UCC has allowed me to make decisions occupationally over the years that have allowed me to engage and reengage in the various

occupations I have had. I am conscious that not everyone has the privilege to choose jobs that are engaging and enriching to their lives. The education I have received in the School of Nursing & Midwifery, Graduate College of Medicine & Health and the Graduate College of Business & Law have allowed me the opportunity and freedom to make those decisions. This has resulted in allowing me to work as a psychiatric nurse, as a Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapist, as Area Director of Mental Health Nursing (and a few more) and more recently as programme lead for the postgraduate course in Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy in the SON&M in UCC. My educational journey has allowed me to come full circle, moving from education as a student to industry and back to education again as an academic.

What is your advice to current UCC students?

See your journey in UCC as a journey, it will form part of your life experience so enjoy it and try not to rush it. Avail of opportunities that arise academically and also socially. Remember what you study now will become part of your life journey but does not have to define the path that you take indefinitely. You will most likely change direction a number of times throughout your life and so acknowledge that reality. Postgraduate education will prepare you at any time to change direction. Do what makes you happy, not what makes others happy. Remember



that you are allowed to change your mind. Also don't let your education or subsequent job define who you are. It contributes to who you are most certainly but remember you are more than the degree(s) you hold and the work you do. Enjoy your course and your fellow students.

Who at UCC had the biggest positive influence on you?

There were a number of Professors in the SON&M that had a very positive impact on my life. The support, guidance and education I received was invaluable. This started once I started my undergraduate course all the way through to my PhD. From these relationships, I developed a lifelong relationship with the school, the university and the academics. It allowed me to develop academically, occupationally and also as a person of which I am most grateful. Another person that significantly impacted on me was the Director of the MBA, Cork Business School Dr Joan Buckley in UCC. How I thought about work, business and life changed. I began to look differently at how I could work so that I could create income so that I could have more time to do the things I wanted to do and spend time with the people I wanted to spend time with. I had thought (as do many) previously that I would educate myself, secure employment, get a mortgage (and other loans) and work to service these debts. She made the class and myself

question, how can we create wealth to create further wealth so we can work less and do more of what we want to do. That shift in thinking has been very helpful and a very positive influence in my life.

Were you involved in any Clubs or Societies?

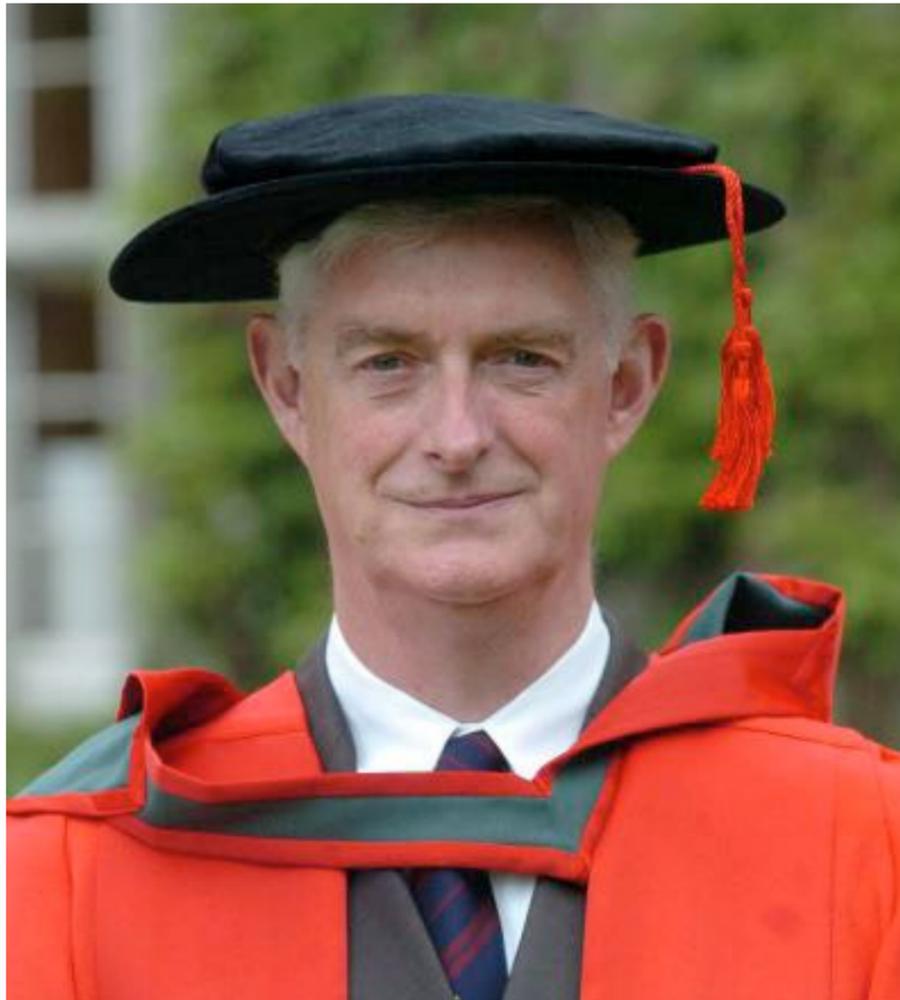
I was involved and tried a number of clubs and societies during my time in UCC. I tried the fencing and archery clubs for a while which were fun. I went to a salsa dancing club with my housemate but I was terrible but was worth a go. I was also part of the SON&M society. Our class were very close so we spent a lot of time socialising which was a great experience also.

What's your favourite UCC legend or superstition?

From the beginning I was very aware of keeping off the grass in the Quad so as not to fail my exams. I still won't walk on the grass. Who knows what degree is next!



UCC Flag Flying at Half Mast in Remembrance of Dr Michael Boland, RIP



On March 25th the President's Office announced the UCC flag was flying at Half Mast in remembrance of Dr Michael Boland who is recently deceased. He received an Honorary Doctorate of Medicine in UCC in 2009 and the College of Medicine and Health would like to give their deepest sympathies to his wife Susan and their three children at this difficult time, he is fondly remembered by everyone who had the distinct pleasure of working with Dr Boland, a truly extraordinary person.

As early as 1979, over a quarter of a century prior to the publication of the Fottrell and Buttimer reports on medical education, Dr Boland proposed that existing continuing medical education for general practitioners be supplemented by small group learning that focused on peer review and organised in each locality by a part-time GP tutor. As National Director of the Continuing Medical Education Network from 1986 to 1997 he directed a network of 29 GP Tutors serving 1650 general practitioners in more than 130 peer review groups. These groups were vital for the continuing professional development of GPs, but also provided a mechanism to address the professional and other forms of isolation that are such a hazard to the middle aged professional. He also became involved in the foundation of the Irish College of General Practitioners. In 1984 he drafted the constitution of the new Irish College and became its first Chairman of Council from 1984 to 1987, a period in which 95% of Irish general practitioners took up membership. As a member of the

Medical Council of Ireland he successfully proposed the recognition of General Practice as a specialty in medicine - Ireland became the first European Commission member state to do so in 1989. Michael next turned his attention to Europe. He was the founding Irish member of the European Academy of Teachers in General Practice and a council member for 20 years. Having excelled in Ireland, the UK, and in Europe the next step was inevitably to take on the World. WONCA is the World Organisation of National Colleges, Academies and Academic Associations of General Practitioners/Family Physicians. Dr Boland joined the Council of WONCA to represent Ireland in 1986. In 1992 he was elected to join the World Executive. In 2001 he took over the Presidency of WONCA. At that time WONCA represented 65 countries. Over the course of his presidency it grew to represent 83 countries and comprised 100 member organisations. At a local level Michael played a vital role in the establishment of a chair in General Practice at UCC. He also supported the successful completion through UCC of one of the largest clinical studies performed among elderly patients in general practice, a study that guides contemporary clinical practice. It is no surprise to learn that he attributed his success to the enormous support of his wife Susan and their three children. He played a critical role in the evolution of contemporary general practice in Ireland. He also acted as a wonderful ambassador for Irish medicine.