

UltraNews

eNewsletter of Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate



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Welcome to the Winter edition of UltraNews, the staff newsletter of Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate

I am pleased to be writing to you once again with the latest edition of UltraNews, filled with updates about the work and progress across Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate this winter.

In many ways 2021 has flown by and it's hard to believe it is now December. So much has happened this year. Early in 2021 with the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccination programme, we had renewed hope on suppressing the virus while continuing to deliver the safest possible care to the women and infants in our region. The cyberattack delivered a blow to health services throughout the country and combined with the COVID-19 pandemic, we have all been challenged in new and different ways. I frequently talk about how proud I am of the staff across the Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate. I have never been prouder of our staff than this year. In the face of difficult and extraordinary times, you have risen to the challenge time and again, innovating and collaborating to continue delivering safe services for our patients.

There is so much great work going on across the units/hospitals in

the Directorate. I am pleased that we can bring you details about a fraction of that work in this edition of UltraNews.

In October, An Taoiseach Micheál Martin T.D., visited CUMH to officially open new facilities at the hospital. On the same day, commemorative medals were presented in a socially distanced manner by An Taoiseach to representatives of our CUMH staff. The medals were commissioned to mark the work of all our dedicated, multidiscipline teams during the COVID-19 pandemic. All staff throughout the Directorate will receive their own medal in the near future.

Vaccinations have been to the forefront of our minds this year. It has never been more important to get the seasonal flu vaccine. Last year, in CUMH we achieved 86% uptake on the seasonal flu vaccine, and I am hoping this year, there will be an even higher uptake throughout the Directorate. Thank you to everyone who has had the seasonal flu vaccine as well as the third vaccination against COVID-19. We have a duty

of care towards our patients, our colleagues, our visitors and our communities and vaccination is the key to protecting us all.

Well done to UHW on setting up an Outpatient Hysteroscopy Clinic earlier this year. The clinic is an initiative to improve access to diagnostics and treatments for women with heavy menstrual bleeding, abnormal uterine bleeding and postmenopausal bleeding and will be of benefit to the women who avail of these services.

News from UHK includes an account of how one of the Maternity Services patients was guided and supported by the UHK team when she was diagnosed with gestational diabetes and subsequently with type 1 diabetes. Feedback from patients is vital to help us to enhance our services.

Every year we highlight National Breastfeeding Week around the Directorate and we do so again this year starting with some news from TUH about how the team there has strived to meet the needs of the breastfeeding families attending maternity services there in these very challenging times.

Congratulations to Dr John Coulter, Consultant Gynecological Oncologist at CUMH and the staff at the National Gestational Trophoblastic Disease Centre who have been recognised at the 2021 Health Service Excellence Awards. Dr Coulter and his team have received the Excellence in Quality Care award.

The team has been recognised for the establishment of the national centre to provide excellence in care to all women in Ireland diagnosed with molar pregnancy, the most common type of gestational trophoblastic disease (GTD) that occurs in 1 in 500 pregnancies in Ireland. Until recently the management of this rare disease has been inconsistent in Ireland and many patients had to travel to the UK for treatment.

I hope that you enjoy reading UltraNews. At this time of year, we include news about how events like National Breastfeeding Week, Baby Loss Awareness Week and Antibiotics Awareness Day were marked across the Directorate.

Thank you to each one of you for your hard work and dedication to our patients again this year. On behalf of Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate, I wish you and those you hold dear a Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year. Nollaig Shona agus Athbhliain faoi Mhaise Daoibh go léir!

John R. Higgins

*Clinical Director
Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate
Professor of Obstetrics & Gynaecology
University College Cork
South/South West Hospital Group*

An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, T.D. opens new and upgraded facilities at CUMH



Pictured above and right: An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, T.D. listens to the benefits the new and enhanced facilities at CUMH will bring to patients. Picture by Ger McCarthy.

On Friday 15 October, An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, T.D. officially opened new and upgraded facilities at Cork University Maternity Hospital (CUMH) that will further enhance the maternity and gynaecological services that the hospital currently offers women and babies in Cork and the surrounding region.

An Taoiseach was met on arrival to CUMH by Professor John R. Higgins, Clinical Director of Cork University Maternity Hospital and Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate and Gerry O'Dwyer, Chief Executive Officer, South / South West Hospital Group. A short tour of the new and enhanced facilities followed, during which An Taoiseach listened as staff described the benefits that the facilities will bring to patients.

Taoiseach Micheál Martin said: "I have a long connection with CUMH, and I am delighted to be back here again today to witness the ongoing progress in providing vital healthcare for the women and infants of this region by Professor Higgins and the team.

I would like to pay tribute to all the staff at CUMH for the dedication and commitment shown in caring for their patients throughout the pandemic."

The new facilities include an Ambulatory Gynaecology Suite and Gynaecology Day Unit (GDU), which are both located on the fourth floor of the hospital. Referred patients will be seen and treated for specialised day care by staff focussed on improving the health of their patients as efficiently as possible.



These new facilities will further streamline gynaecological patient care and form part of the ongoing innovations that have been developed by CUMH to tackle gynaecology waiting lists and provide exceptional levels of care to women in Cork and its surrounding area.

The existing Induction Room Delivery Suite on the ground floor of CUMH has been enhanced considerably making the suite a more comfortable environment for both patients and staff. The suite now has three private single rooms and a midwife monitoring station, facilitating close monitoring of the birthing mother, and ensuring the patient is at the centre of care at all time and their birthing partner can be with the patient at all times too.

After the official opening, a small and socially distanced group gathered in the glass corridor on the fifth floor to hear speeches from Professor Higgins, An Taoiseach and Gerry O'Dwyer.

The speeches touched on various topics including the Taoiseach's long-standing relationship with CUMH and details about the new and enhanced facilities at CUMH, to the dedication of staff to their work, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Professor Higgins expressed his gratitude to colleagues across the HSE, the Department of Health, the National Women and Infants Health Programme and HSE Capital and Estates without whose support, the new developments at CUMH would not have been possible.

When the speeches were completed, Averil Stannard, Senior Midwife took to the podium to read a poignant and humorous poem, penned by Celine O'Keeffe, Clinical Midwife Manager, capturing the highs and lows that staff at CUMH experienced over the past two years during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The visit was concluded with An Taoiseach presenting commemorative

medals to staff representatives from the teams at CUMH to honour staff for their hard work during the COVID-19 pandemic. The front of the medals carries the Ireland South brand, along with the names of the hospitals/units in the Directorate. On the reverse of each medal, the words “Dedication, Compassion, Resilience” appear along with the message “Go raibh míle maith agat.”

Professor Higgins said: “Our staff continued to provide their excellent level of care during the COVID-19 pandemic, and we felt it appropriate to mark their dedication to CUMH and the community we serve with a commemorative medal.”

Representatives who received medals on the day included but were not

limited to staff members from diverse teams such as midwifery, nursing, non-consultant hospital doctors (NCHDs), security, catering and housekeeping. Each member of staff across the Ireland South Directorate will shortly receive their own medal.

Due to social distance restrictions around COVID-19, a limited number of staff attended the gathering on the fifth-floor glass corridor. To ensure that staff members who could not be present could participate in the occasion, the speeches and medal ceremony was shared via a live online link. To close ceremonies, Professor Higgins presented a medal to An Taoiseach on behalf of all maternity services to thank him for his support for maternity services and tireless work as our public representative.



Pictured above: *The front and reverse of the commemorative medals.*

2020 – TO THE HERE AND NOW

A poem by Celine O’Keeffe, CMM3, CUMH



Thinking all the way back to March 2020
Fears and worries of course there were plenty.
As Covid came to our world and turned it upside down
When we began to wear a mask to cover the frown.

Pictured above:
Averil Stannard, Senior Midwife, reads a poem by Celine O’Keeffe. Picture by Ger McCarthy.

We built a huge tent almost overnight
Had our temperature checked and asked were we alright.
It did almost blow away on many a windy day
And now in its place there are two cabins to stay.

If we had a cough or a cold, we didn’t come in to work at all
We just stayed at home and gave Occ health a call.
Sent off for a swab and waited for the results with hope
That it turned out Negative, how did we cope?

We monitored and tested and delivered babies galore
Covid was here but we couldn’t close our door!
Mothers and babies at the centre of all that we do
But now we were dealing with more than just the Flu!

We washed and we cleaned until our skin was sore
Baked in gowns and PPE, we could hardly take anymore.
New signs were erected all over the place
We hardly knew each other with the mask on our face.

Our Break rooms were gone; we couldn't chat for too long
No more gatherings or meetings, it all felt so wrong!
Corridors for breaks, with tables and chairs everywhere
Or take a stroll outside to find a portacabin to share.

In January all our staff had the Vaccine, Dose One and Two
And with that, a sense of hope in all of us grew.
Sore arms. Pains and aches. But it had to be done
Because this was battle that had to be won.

A Cyber Attack in May, now that didn't seem real,
It's caused so much hassle, and something else we had to deal.
Our MN CMS was gone and it was paper and charts everywhere
It was the cruelest blow; it just did not seem fair.

But again we got up and we took on the task
And we had to hide our fury behind the mask.
With all hands on deck we got through this too
What a challenge it was, that much is true!

During all this time we built new rooms and got new places
Shiny new floors in our indoors spaces.
Our staff got new uniforms, and stepped out in style
In CUMH, we always like to go that extra mile.

Keeping our Dads outside made us really sad
Though many people thought we were really bad!
But it had to be this way to keep all the bugs at bay
And now we have our Dads visiting for most of the day.

We marvel at our strength and resilience too
What wonderful staff, together we all made it through.
Some days were so hard and often difficult to bear
But we had each other in this time to share.

There were days we had to laugh so we wouldn't cry
There were days we could scream but we could only sigh.
The Pandemic was bad but the Cyber-attack made it worse
Oh, just thinking of it now, it was a terrible curse!

Our team is amazing and everyone deserves a mention
A token of thanks is the very intention.
Every person who works in CUMH has played a part
In how we all dealt with Covid from the very start.

But here we are and our story's been told
We have no idea from here what the next year will hold
But Today is a Good Day and the end is nigh
To the last 18 months we gladly say goodbye.

Staff representatives receive their commemorative medals



Above left: Niamh Spillane, Clinical Midwifery Manager 3 receives her commemorative medal.



Above right: Helena Bugler, representing Midwifery and Nursing receives her commemorative medal.

All pictures by Ger McCarthy.



Above left: Siobhan Kennedy representing Healthcare Assistants, receives her commemorative medal.



Above right: Marie Hennessey representing Housekeeping, received her commemorative medal.



Above left: Richard Masongsong representing Theatre Staff receives his commemorative medal.



Above right: Maria Leahy, Acting Manager, Social Work Services representing HSCPs, receives her commemorative medal.



Above left: Dr Brendan Murphy, Clinical Lead Neonatology, representing Consultants receives his commemorative medal.



Above right: Alison Fahy, representing Clerical Staff, receives her commemorative medal.



Above left: Martin Higgins representing Portering, receives his commemorative medal.

Above right: Noreen O'Sullivan representing Security Personnel receives her commemorative medal.



Above left: Catherine Kelleher, representing Noonan's receives her commemorative medal.

Above right: Eoin Dunlea, representing Maintenance receives his commemorative medal.



Above left: Janet Kelly, representing our shop workers receives her commemorative medal.

Above right: Patrick Begley, representing Catering receives his commemorative medal.



Pictured left: An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin T.D. receives a commemorative medal from Professor John R. Higgins, Clinical Director, Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate.



Outpatient Hysteroscopy – introducing Ambulatory Gynaecology to UHW

By Dr Azriny Khalid, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist

Pictured above: Dr Azriny Khalid, Elaine Roche, CMM, Ambulatory Gynaecology, Ms. Valerie Barry, Health Care Assistant.

On 21 April 2021, we welcomed the first few patients into the Outpatient Hysteroscopy Clinic in University Hospital Waterford (UHW). The clinic is an initiative to improve access to diagnostics and treatments for women with heavy menstrual bleeding, abnormal uterine bleeding and postmenopausal bleeding.

The Outpatient Hysteroscopy Clinic (OHC) serves as a one-stop service for the management of abnormal uterine bleeding. In one visit, patients with abnormal uterine bleeding have a pelvic ultrasound followed by hysteroscopy, endometrial biopsy and treatment including removal of endometrial polyps, submucosal fibroids, IUCD insertions and retrieval of lost IUCDs. This replaces traditionally having a pelvic ultrasound in the Radiology Department followed

by EUA, hysteroscopy, D&C in theatre. This should reduce the outpatients and radiology waiting lists, number of outpatient visits and save costs on theatre sessions and day-case beds. This will also increase access for other gynaecological procedures to be done in theatre.

The OHC is run weekly by Dr Azriny Khalid, Consultant Obstetrician/ Gynaecologist, Ms. Elaine Roche, CMM, Ambulatory Gynaecology and Ms. Valerie Barry, Health Care Assistant, and more recently, once a month by Dr John Bermingham.

To date, just under 100 patients have been seen in the OHC with the majority tolerating the visit very well. We hope to develop this service further to provide a wider range of treatments suitable for the ambulatory setting in the future.

CUMH Antimicrobial Guidelines Launch

By Susan Potter, Senior Antimicrobial Pharmacist, CUMH



The CUMH Antimicrobial Guidelines were launched on the MicroGuide App on the 27th of September. The launch was announced at the Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate Grand Rounds on the 24th of September by CUMH's new Microbiology Consultant, Dr Deirdre Broderick and the new Antimicrobial Pharmacist, Susan Potter. These guidelines were a joint antimicrobial stewardship collaboration between CUMH and UHK.

Sarah Fenton, Antimicrobial Pharmacist, CUH put a huge volume of work into publishing the antimicrobial guidelines in 2020 and secured funding from Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate for creating an antimicrobial guidelines app. Kate Finch, Senior Clinical Informatics Pharmacist, CUMH, Dr Síle O'Connor, Antimicrobial Pharmacist, UHK, Emma Flaherty, Senior Clinical Informatics Pharmacist, UHK, Alana Dineen, Senior Clinical Pharmacist, CUMH and Susan Potter worked collaboratively to digitise the antimicrobial guidelines.

Technology offers huge potential for healthcare by providing services that are convenient and efficient for users. MicroGuide is a platform specifically designed for hosting clinical guidelines for hospitals and is already in use throughout the UK and in several Irish hospitals. The app is designed to be an easy way to access infection management information to support appropriate antimicrobial use and antimicrobial stewardship. We need to support improved access to the information clinicians need to guide their decision making so that our patients receive consistent, effective care. Particularly in the case of a severe, time critical situation such as the treatment of sepsis.

As well as providing the guidelines for prophylaxis or treatment of infections, the

app will also have a number of resources to help improve safety of antimicrobial use. Antimicrobial Apps can improve adherence with prescribing guidelines, thereby improving treatment outcomes, minimising the risk of antimicrobial resistance, and reducing the healthcare costs associated with the treatment of infection.

The free app can be downloaded from Apple Store, Google Play or Microsoft Stores to any phone or tablet. No password is required to access the app. A desktop version will be available on the staff intranet or can be accessed on any computer desktop via a specific link. Any updates to the guidelines will automatically update on any user's device so the most up to date version is always available. The search function allows easy and quick searching of full guidelines for any required information. Both CUMH and UHK now use the MN-CMS electronic health record. Where applicable, the yellow care plan will be included with a guideline to let users know that there is a prescribing care plan for this indication on MN-CMS. Where there is a care plan in place all the recommended antimicrobial regimens for an indication are listed together and the prescriber can select the appropriate regimen based on the patient's penicillin allergy status. Using these care plans improves accuracy and efficiency of prescribing and helps to ensure compliance with guidelines. Modern technology offers huge potential for healthcare and support services for delivering high quality services that are both convenient for users, cost-effective and efficient.

Please contact susan.potter@hse.ie if you are having any issues with the apps functions or formatting.



Antibiotic Awareness Day, CUMH 2021

By Susan Potter, Senior Antimicrobial Pharmacist, CUMH

Pictured above: Susan Potter, Senior Antimicrobial Pharmacist, CUMH on Antibiotics Awareness Day in CUMH.

European Antibiotic Awareness Day took place on 18 November 2021 and events were held across the Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate to mark the day. We all need to become guardians of antibiotics and this awareness day aims to highlight why we all need to use antibiotics with care.

Most events in CUMH this year took place virtually. We joined the Twitter conversation on the day reminding people to visit www.undertheweather.ie to see how common viruses can be treated without antibiotics this winter.

An email message was sent out to all staff members highlighting efforts that are being made in CUMH to ensure antibiotics are being used appropriately. The email highlighted the new MicroGuide app to encourage prescribers to download it and refer to it. The email reminded everyone that we need to unite to preserve antibiotics. An online quiz was also circulated in the email about our antimicrobial guidelines. Pauline Hayes, Staff Midwife, CUMH won a €50 One4All voucher by entering this quiz.

A banner was displayed in the reception area of CUMH to greet visitors with the message

that if we take antibiotics when they are not needed, they may not work when our lives depend on them. Other information posters were also displayed.

The Antimicrobial Stewardship team recruited frontline staff including doctors and pharmacists to wear t-shirts carrying key antimicrobial stewardship messages.



Above: Tweet to raise awareness about Antibiotics Awareness Day.





Antibiotics Awareness Day, UHK 2021

By Dr Síle O'Connor, Antimicrobial Pharmacist, UHK

Pictured above: Caroline O'Connor, Quality Manager, Dr Síle O'Connor, Antimicrobial Pharmacist, Lena Sheehan, UCC Pharmacy Student, Dr Hila Jazayeri, Medical Intern, Dr Iman Faez, Medical SHO, David Hobbart, Chief Pharmacist.

We had a real buzz at UHK on Antibiotics Awareness Day, with stands in the front atrium and in the main restaurant. The stands carried the “Resist” message, and Antimicrobial Resistance and Infection Control (AMRIC) and UHK Antibiotics Patient Information leaflets. In addition, the stand in the staff restaurant distributed summary findings from the 2021 Antimicrobials Point Prevalence Survey, where UHK showed its best results to date. Staff were also offered copies of local clinical pathways and visual prompts, which are used locally to promote prudent antimicrobial prescribing practices.

On the day, UHK hospital management funded t-shirts with key antimicrobial stewardship slogans for frontline staff including those in Medical, Nursing and in Pharmacy. The t-shirts carried short stewardship messages to all areas of the hospital, with no risk to Infection Control.

An antimicrobial quiz was held with epic prizes sponsored by the Meadowlands Hotel, Tralee. Over 100 people entered. Some answers to the questions addressed quality improvement initiatives identified by the September Point Prevalence Survey. Another question highlighted the recent introduction of the MicroGuide App for our Obs/Gynae antimicrobial guidelines (Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate). The answers to the quiz questions were available on the slogan bearing t-shirts, which created lots of fun conversations around Antimicrobial Stewardship in all areas of the hospital.

Visitors to the stands included Fearghal Grimes, Hospital Manager, Caroline O'Connor, Quality Manager, Dr Gabriela Dornikova, Consultant Microbiologist, as well as Consultants from Medical, Surgical, Orthopaedics, Anaesthetics, Paediatrics, Obs/Gynae and Palliative Care.



Baby Loss Awareness Week 2021 in UHK

By Carrie Dillon, CMS Bereavement, UHK

Maternity Services UHK held a virtual Service of Remembrance this year. We also planned a number of other events to mark Baby Loss Awareness Week 2021, with the aim of:

- Supporting bereaved families
- Commemorating babies' lives
- Raising awareness about pregnancy loss
- Driving change and improvements in both care and support

Our Service of Remembrance was hosted on the UHK Facebook and Twitter sites on Saturday 9th October at the start of Baby Loss Awareness Week. This service involved members of staff, parents and the hospital choir. For the first time, UHK lit up in blue and pink to join other maternity hospital / units and public buildings throughout Ireland.

#WaveofLight

A video was available on Friday 15th October encouraging the public and staff to join in this global movement from their own homes by lighting a candle between 7-8pm to commemorate #WaveofLight. Together, these videos to date have had over 9,000 views.

A Bereavement Education Workshop was also held in the Centre for Nurse & Midwifery Education. At the end of this study day, members of staff from the Labour ward presented Mairie from Féileacáin with a fundraising cheque from the recent walk on International Day of the Midwife in remembrance of our dear colleague, Mary Cotter. As this charity is totally dependent on donations and fundraising by the bereaved

parents it supports, we continued our fundraising for Féileacáin during the week in the UHK main canteen. An email address uhk.memorytree@hse.ie was created to enable bereaved parents to write a message for their baby. These messages were inscribed on memory tags and placed on a memory tree which was located on the Maternity Unit. There was a huge response to this initiative and sincere acknowledgements from families for providing this opportunity to remember their babies.

In preparation for Baby Loss Awareness Week, recently bereaved parents kindly wrote an article for a local newspaper highlighting their story and raising awareness about Baby Loss Awareness Week.

As the CMS Bereavement, I wrote a newspaper article and gave an interview on local radio to highlight the importance of Baby Loss Awareness Week and the plans that UHK had put in place to commemorate same in the midst of COVID-19 restrictions.

We were overwhelmed at the public response to the services offered which again highlighted the need for parents to have these opportunities to grieve and acknowledge the loss of their baby.

We look forward to 2022 with hope that our Service of Remembrance can once again take place where families and staff can come together in person to commemorate this special week. #BLAW



CUMH Remembers 2021

By Daniel Nuzum, Chairperson, CUMH Bereavement Committee

Our Annual Service of Remembrance has always been an important event in our hospital calendar as we gather with our bereaved families and staff colleagues to acknowledge and remember all who have died in pregnancy or shortly after birth and their parents and families. For the second year, it was not possible to gather in person. Mindful of the importance of this event and perhaps even more so because of the impact of isolation on grieving, the CUMH Bereavement Committee prepared an online Service of Remembrance. The professional production from 2020 was enhanced with a shorter ceremony from the beautiful Prayer Room at CUMH. Families were invited once again to submit names and a short message for inscription on a Remembrance Leaf. The leaves were then added to our Remembrance Tree in the Prayer Room. On the evening of Friday 15 October -The International Day of Pregnancy and Infant Loss- a number of staff gathered at the entrance of the hospital for a live Instagram introduction and time of remembrance. Instagram was a particularly engaging form of social media with our bereaved families. The hospital was beautifully lit in pink and blue for the week alongside the flying of our distinctive Teardrop flag. A Remembrance Olive Tree was also planted along the pathway to the hospital.

Bereavement care is the responsibility of all staff; the Pregnancy Loss Research Group provided some educational reminders

for all staff to highlight the importance of every interaction in bereavement care and to appreciate the care provided at CUMH. The Service of Remembrance is still available at www.cumhremembers.ie and further information is on Instagram @cumhremembers

I wish to pay tribute to all in the Bereavement Committee and throughout the hospital for their hard work and commitment in this challenging but very rewarding care.

For the most up to date information on pregnancy and infant loss support, guidelines and policies please visit www.pregnancyandinfantloss.ie on your browser or scan this QR code.



www.pregnancyandinfantloss.ie



National GTD Centre recognised at HSE Service Excellence Awards 2021

Dr John Coulter and the newly established National Gestational Trophoblastic Disease Centre (GTD) at Cork University Maternity Hospital (CUMH), have been recognised at the 2021 Health Service Excellence Awards.

Dr John Coulter, Consultant Gynaecological Oncologist at CUMH, and his team have received the Excellence in Quality Care award. The team has been recognised for the establishment of the national centre to provide excellence in care to all women in Ireland diagnosed with molar pregnancy, the commonest type of gestational trophoblastic disease (GTD) that occurs in 1 in 500 pregnancies in Ireland. Until recently the management of this rare disease has been inconsistent in Ireland and many patients had to travel to the UK for treatment.

Established in 2017, the National Gestational Trophoblastic Disease Centre has managed 500 patients around Ireland with 100% cure rate in patients requiring chemotherapy with no transfer of a patient to another country. A recent patient survey revealed 99% satisfaction with the service and professionalism of the team.

Professor John R. Higgins, Clinical Director, Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate said: "Congratulations to Dr Coulter and the team at GTD. The service the centre is providing is unique in Ireland and I am delighted to see GTD get the recognition that it deserves."

Pictured above: Catherine Duffy (NCCP), Gerry O'Dwyer (CEO SSWHG), Dr John Coulter, Clinical Lead, National GTL Centre, Caitriona Kenneally, CNS National GTD Centre.

Impact of Cyber-attack on Maternity Services University Hospital Kerry (UHK)

By Mairin McElligott, Project Lead Maternity Services, UHK

RESPONSE

Maternity Services UHK like so many other Health Service Executive (HSE) services experienced a day that was unforgettable on the 14 May 2021 when the ransomware attack took place. The working environment had suddenly changed with the all the Information Technology equipment dark and silent at reception desks. No desktops glowing at nursing stations, no mobile laptop carts accompanying their midwives and nurses.

Every conceivable area and department of University Hospital Kerry was impacted, and the enormity of the event and the task ahead emerged as the day unfolded. Maternity Services in UHK had an additional dimension, as the Maternal & Newborn – Clinical Management system is a computer-based system. The system incorporates an Electronic Health Record (EHR) replacing the traditional paper chart.

Maternity Services UHK has always been prepared with the associated policies and responses in place for a system down time; however, it was an inconceivable event to have a situation whereby all IT systems are down at the same time.

All University Hospital Kerry, General and Maternity Staff responded

immediately and without hesitation supported by the office of Chief Information Office, the National MN-CMS team to mention but some. Measures were put in place to be able to provide the optimum care to the women, babies and families attending the service.

The level of innovation and use of digital health has surpassed any previous plans scheduled prior to COVID-19. Resulting in both challenges and benefits during the cyber-attack; as ICT was unavailable, however with presence of third-party companies offered the possibility of data recovery.

Having experienced such an incident, it has provided insight into further improvements to increase Maternity Services' resilience, so as to support service delivery throughout, the data upload and on-going issues following the cyber-attack. There was a requirement for clinical staff working overtime to maintain the services, administrative/management staff worked weekends to retrieve essential data and MN-CMS/LBO staff worked overtime including weekends to retrieve essential data to maintain services and to upload data once systems returned. Additional equipment including clean hardware was required to maintain outpatient clinics operations.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

Availability of additional hardware requirements to enable access to third party systems and data; to enable visibility of OP clinic dates and list, visibility of services users' previous clinic dates and future clinics scheduled, visibility of service user demographics, access to letters if available, visibility of GPs details, future appointments to be scheduled.

A stock of paper charts to be kept in the event of such an occurrence in the future.

Additional staffing is also required:

- Additional ICT staff on site
- Additional Local Back Office Management post and,
- Additional Local Back Office/Clinical Midwifery Manager to support staff and to oversee data back loading.

The downtime policy requires updating to include cyber-attacks, and a secure backup Maternity Services generic email address to enable communication with GPs via Healthlink may be beneficial to maintain communication between acute site and community. Antenatal Clinic

card development (containing name, date-of-birth, address and telephone, GP name and telephone, blood group, allergies and last menstrual period) to be held by service user in the event to system disturbances.

Maternity Services wish to thank all staff for their efforts in responding to this ransomware attack, whilst already responding to COVID-19. Maternity Services would also like to thank third party companies that offered their assistance at this time. Maternity Services regained operational momentum very swiftly with minimal disruption to outpatient clinics.

Looking back at the event, the level of teamwork present was undeniable; intra departmental, inter departmental, across the Directorate and nationally. As environments began to return to status quo, with the welcomed return of technology, the gigantic task of data entry began. Maternity Services UHK have reviewed lessons learnt and proposed measures to increase the resilience for the future.



National Breastfeeding Week

National Breastfeeding Week is a HSE-led event, marked each year from 1-7 October. 'Feeding the future: Supporting breastfeeding through a pandemic and beyond' was the theme of this year's National Breastfeeding Week. Giving our children the best start in life by breastfeeding is the ultimate aim. Celebrated nationally, we are delighted to bring you a round-up of activities, news and celebrations at TUH, UHW, UHK and CUMH.

National Breastfeeding Week 2021 at Tipperary University Hospital

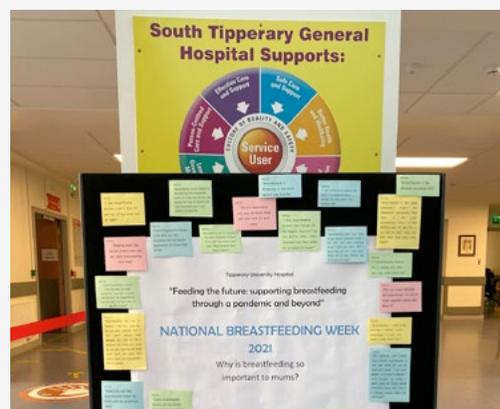
By Anabella Almeida, CMM2 - Infant Feeding and Lactation Specialist

The 1st of October marks the beginning of National Breastfeeding Week, which is celebrated nationwide by breastfeeding families, breastfeeding supporters and professionals, in order to raise awareness for the importance of breastfeeding. 'Feeding the future: Supporting breastfeeding through a pandemic and beyond' is this year's moto, which very appropriately refers to the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic placed on the breastfeeding support services and their users.

Tipperary University Hospital has strived to meet the needs of the breastfeeding families attending this maternity unit in these very challenging times. All antenatal classes, including breastfeeding classes, are now being provided live online to prevent unnecessary gatherings. Our Lactation and Infant Feeding Specialist, Anabela Almeida (IBCLC), has developed a referral pathway so that women that have specific concerns or health conditions that can impact breastfeeding, can be seen during their pregnancy and have a care plan in place for when baby is born. This service also includes breastfeeding support by phone, email, and in person if required, after women and babies are discharged from maternity, on a self-referral basis. To promote and optimize breastfeeding in the Special Care Baby Unit, a new hospital grade pump is now available for loan to mums that are at

home while their baby is still admitted. Also 4 new pumps have been purchased for use in the postnatal ward, as well as a new steam sterilizing system.

With the aim of diverging the focus from feeding challenges, onto the plethora of breastfeeding benefits, the team at our maternity unit has put together a display of real statements from mums about their breastfeeding experiences. The main display in the photo below was located at the hospital reception, and there were others throughout several locations to raise breastfeeding awareness amongst clients and staff. All mums whose babies were born during National Breastfeeding Week received a gift bag with breastfeeding and infant hygiene products, as well as a "Thank you for breastfeeding" card.



National Breastfeeding Week in University Hospital Waterford

By Paula Curtin, Director of Midwifery, UHW

University Hospital Waterford Maternity Services marked National Breastfeeding Week (1st to 7th of October) with the theme of "Feeding the future: Supporting breastfeeding through a pandemic and beyond"

As part of National Breastfeeding Week, an exhibit was installed at UHW based on photos sent in by mothers of their babies born recently in the service. Organised by Clinical Midwife Specialist -Lactation, Claire Bulfin the exhibit was opened by Nicola O'Rourke (recent mum to baby Rían) and addressed by Paula Curtin, Director of Midwifery, UHW.

The launch also featured senior staff nurses in the UHW Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), Marie Claire Skehan and Eveleen Herron, who spoke about the starter pack given to mums with all she needs (information and equipment) to get the process of hand expressing started.

Speaking about the exhibit at UHW Claire said: "The pandemic was a very difficult time for pregnant mothers and of course for new mothers. It may be in years to come that we'll become aware of the 'untold stories' of many such women during the pandemic.

This exhibit is an acknowledgement, a contribution in that respect."

"Some 62% of women breastfeed their new babies in Ireland and it's actually closer to 68% in terms of babies born in UHW. The HSE, here in UHW and surrounding areas through South East Community Healthcare and working with others in the community (including breastfeeding groups and the library service) are highlighting the importance of breastfeeding, encouraging it and providing and developing resources in its regard."

Great thanks is given to all midwifery, nursing and the multidisciplinary team in Maternity & Neonatal Services for their contribution supporting mothers and in addition it was acknowledged that the role of Clinical Midwife Specialist in service has very much enhanced the services.

Pictured above: Paula Curtin DOM, Claire Bulfin CMS, Nicola O'Rourke, Mother, Mary Claire Skehan Staff Nurse NICU-lactation consultant, Eveleen Herron, Staff Nurse NICU-lactation consultant.

Celebrations for National Breastfeeding Week 2021 University Hospital Kerry

By Mairead O'Sullivan, A/CNM2 Infant Feeding Coordinator



Pictured above: Launch of staff survey for PPEB study in UHK staff canteen.

To commence National Breastfeeding Week, UHK specially designed celebration posters were on display throughout the Unit, 'Feeding the Future, Breastfeeding during a Pandemic'. Pull up posters first designed in 2020 which displayed 4 images of maternity service staff in UHK feeding their newborn babies, were on display in Antenatal waiting areas, Postnatal ward and also Special Care Baby Unit

Throughout the year the team in University Hospital Kerry has looked to enhance the support and education provided to mothers in the maternity services. Service Users and staff took part in many of the events hosted. University Hospital Kerry Social Media Platforms displayed many stories from Kerry breastfeeding mothers who had used the services throughout the year these videos were displayed on a daily basis and were enjoyed by many followers.

In the last 12-month period, Infant feeding Coordinator Mairead O'Sullivan and Mary O'Connor, CNME Midwifery Coordinator have facilitated 2 x 20 hours Breastfeeding Management Courses for Maternity and Public Health Nursing staff along with 14 x 6 hours Refresher Courses. For National Breastfeeding Week 2021, the theme 'Feeding the Future, breastfeeding during a Pandemic', the plans for celebration in UHK focussed on enhancing service users breastfeeding support experiences as well as provision of additional staff Breastfeeding Education.

Mairead along with support from the Infant Feeding Committee hosted a virtual coffee morning via WebEx on 1 October for past services users of the maternity department. This was received well by the service user group and attended by Maternity CMM3 Mary Stack Courtney, Practice

Development Coordinator, Priscilla Lyons, Business Manager Janice McHugh, CAMP Joann Malik. The morning provided a great opportunity for staff to hear back from mothers on how their breastfeeding journeys had evolved over the last weeks and months with a variety of topics discussed, including breastmilk expression, sleeping routines, weaning to solids, developmental milestones and even starting crèche. Although it was virtual, it did give a great opportunity for mixed discussion. Staff on maternity services area all enjoyed some cupcakes provided for them as part of the week's celebrations.

As part of the week's staff educational events, Mairead facilitated a Breastfeeding Update for all in attendance at Maternity Governance and also carried out a specific workshop with the Paediatric/Neonatal Team members as part of their weekly education session. Problem solving case studies were discussed included neonatal hypoglycaemia, jaundice and greater than 10% weight loss. This presentation was enthusiastically received by all.

On 1 October, Maternity Services Infant Feeding Clinic celebrated one year since the clinic was first launched as part of National Breastfeeding Week, 2020. Since then, the clinic has grown, with clinics now facilitated on a weekly basis by either Mairead O'Sullivan or Seona O'Toole CMM1 Postnatal Ward/IBCLC.

Mairead, who was nominated as a council member of the Association of Lactation Consultants in Ireland in March 2021, attended her first ALCI conference assisting and facilitating the full-day conference on 2 October. The conference was attended by many members of University Hospital Kerry staff.

On Monday 4 October a staff 6-hour Breastfeeding Refresher Program was facilitated by Mary O'Connor and Mairead. The day was opened by Guest Speaker National Breastfeeding Coordinator, Laura McHugh, who provided a hugely informative update on all topics breastfeeding in Ireland. It was a great privilege to have had Laura as part of the day. Mairead was also interviewed by Deirdre Walsh on Radio Kerry, highlighting the additional support available to woman in UHK maternity services for their breastfeeding journeys.

On Thursday 6 October, Professor Patricia Leahy-Warren and Dr Michelle O'Driscoll, UCC, launched the Staff Survey, the initial steps in the 2-year research project PEEB (Practice Enhancement for Exclusive Breastfeeding) in UHK. Director of Midwifery, Sandra O'Connor and Mairead O'Sullivan met with the team as part of the launch of the staff survey in the hospital canteen. Staff in UHK Maternity are privileged to have been selected as the hospital pilot site for the 2-year study and looking forward to working with the team in the months ahead.

Overall, the week was full of activity and enjoyed by staff with lots of new breastfeeding babies born throughout the week.



Above: Cupcakes provided at various staff education sessions throughout National Breastfeeding Week.

Joint Quality Improvement Initiative launched by CUMH Breastfeeding Coordinator and Community Public Health Team in Kinsale Primary Healthcare

By Susan O'Driscoll, Breastfeeding Coordinator, CUMH

National Breastfeeding Week is celebrated each year from the 1-7 of October. This is the end of the calendar week 40 of each year and symbolizes the start of a new relationship between a mother and child and the **beginning of their breastfeeding journey**.

On 7 October 2021, a **new joint quality improvement initiative** was launched by Cork University Maternity Hospital Breastfeeding Coordinator, Susan O'Driscoll, RM, International Board-certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC), Martina Corkery, Assistant Director of Nursing and Barbara Noonan Sexton RM, Public Health Nurse, IBCLC. This joint initiative was to start a breastfeeding support group outside of the hospital with the community public health nursing teams. This joint initiative was to run as a pilot project for 3 months.

The current situation in CUMH is many mothers are contacting our services once having left, requesting additional supports. We are seeing up to an additional 40/50 mothers a month in our supports service. There are many public health nurses who are also IBCLC's in the community and this joint approach will aim to increase community supports and also provide a platform for ongoing information sharing falling in line with the Breastfeeding in Healthy Ireland Document.

Prior to the commencement of the support group, Susan had a discussion with her Director of Midwifery in CUMH, Katie Bourke. With her support and the support of the Director of Public Health Nursing, Brenda Golden in the community, Susan decided firstly to facilitate a

six-hour breastfeeding refresher course for HSE staff in the Kinsale/ Bandon area.

The requirements to attend the breastfeeding refresher course was completion of the two HSEland modules, one **Supporting Breastfeeding** and the second was **Breastfeeding Challenges** and to read the National Infant Feeding Policy 2019.

As we know, enhanced training and continued education is associated with better outcomes for breastfeeding initiation and duration. The course was facilitated by Susan and expert guest speakers from Public Health were Sheila Lucey PHN, IBCLC, West Cork and Claire Crowley, PHN, IBCLC North Lee. These guest speakers contributed greatly to the success of the day. Following on from this education day the Kinsale Breastfeeding support group was established.

Barbara Noonan Sexton came on board in facilitating this support group. Barbara is also a Public Health Nurse and an IBCLC. Both Susan and Barbara are fully aware that despite gradual increases over the last ten years, Ireland's breastfeeding rates continue to be the lowest in international comparisons (Victoria et al. 2016; Europeristst, 2013) with implications for maternal and child health. Most recently published NPRS data reports 56.9% any breastfeeding on discharge from maternity services, 46.3% exclusive breastfeeding (HSE, 2016). Breastfeeding initiation rates in Ireland are currently among the lowest, compared to initiation rates of 90% in Australia, 81% in the UK and 79% in the USA (HSE, 2016; NHS, 2011; PHAA,2010, CDC, 2014). Breastfeeding rates

strongly correlate to maternal education and social class. The Growing up in Ireland study found that 79% of mothers who breastfed had a third-level degree breastfed compared with 29% who left school at Junior Certificate level (Williams et al , 2010).

Susan and Barbara feel strongly that women, dads/ partners need the support once they have left the Maternity Hospital to try to change the faltering statistic and ensure they are provided with **the right advice at the right time and at the right place** to ensure that each mother's breastfeeding journey is a positive and empowering experience. The WHO Global Targets to improve maternal, infant and young child nutrition include the target of an increase by 2025, to a rate of at least 50% exclusive breastfeeding rates in the first six months.

The Breastfeeding Action Plan 2016-2021 sets out the priority areas to be addressed to improve breastfeeding supports, to enable more mothers in Ireland to breastfeed and to improve health outcomes for mothers and children in Ireland. The Action Plan encourages the need to provide skilled support to mothers, through our maternity services, hospitals, and primary care services.

All Public Health Nurses and GP's in Kinsale/ Bandon area can refer mums and babies to this Breastfeeding Clinic. Even though this clinic is in its infancy, appointments are booked each week well in advance and bookings are now being pushed a week ahead as the demand for this service is ever increasing.

The support group is currently being facilitated by Susan and Barbara who are both qualified midwives and International Board-Certified Lactation Consultants. Both provide **one-to-one support** for mothers experiencing any challenge on their breastfeeding journey and provide peer support and **shared expertise** between their areas of work. This support group will enable us to promote, support and protect breastfeeding in Kinsale and surrounding areas within the Healthy Ireland framework and across HSE Health and Wellbeing and Primary Care.

At this support group they provide evidence-based care that promotes and supports breastfeeding that is appropriate to their needs, to maintain breastfeeding in the early weeks after the birth of their babies, and to enable them to continue breastfeeding.

Both Susan and Barbara firmly believe that The Breastfeeding Action Plan (2016-2021) needs to be fully implemented in order to support and empower women and their families on their breastfeeding journey. The actions include the:

1. Implementation of policies at hospital and community level.
2. Investment in Breastfeeding Training & Skills Development for healthcare staff.
3. The Provision of additional Lactation Specialist Posts (CMS / CNS Lactation).
4. Partnership working to Promote a Culture that accepts and supports breastfeeding.

The establishment of this support group is an important step in ensuring that all children in Kinsale and surrounds get the best possible start in life. On 16 December this pilot project will hopefully move to a permanent support group for all the mothers of Kinsale and surrounds, as Susan will return to CUMH. To date we have supported over 50 mothers in this, appointment based, one to one, weekly support group, enabling all these mothers to continue on their breastfeeding journey.



Pictured above: Susan O'Driscoll, Breastfeeding Coordinator, CUMH and Barbara Noonan Sexton RM, Public Health Nurse, IBCLC.



Pictured above: Susan Vaughan, Staff Midwife, Amy O'Connell, Staff Nurse and Catherine Dineen, Staff Nurse.

In September, CUMH NNU took part in the 'Babies with books read-a-thon'. This is a fun annual event that started in America to promote family-led reading in Neonatal Intensive Care Units for the benefit of infants and their families. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, reading with babies creates and strengthens neural connections that: *"promote ... social-emotional development ... and language and literacy skills during this critical period of early brain and child development."*

Reading to NICU babies is also a great way to bond and to improve the hospital experience. Babies love to hear the comforting sound of their parent's voice. While a baby is in NNU it can be a stressful or difficult time for families and being able to take the time to read a nursery rhyme or a short story is beneficial for baby and parent/caregiver.

This year the read-a-thon ran from 13-23 September. The initiative was led by Susan Vaughan, Staff Midwife and it was embraced by NNU staff and parents alike.

Susan registered CUMH for the read-a-thon and got in touch with the CUH Charity who provided money to buy books for CUMH NNU.

In total, 120 NICU's around the world registered to take place in the "Babies with books read-a-thon" in 2020 and CUMH came 13th in numbers of reading encounters over the two-week period in September.

Susan says: "The read-a-thon was a great success. Parents really engaged with reading to their preterm babies, and we received very positive feedback. After a few days, parents started to bring in their own books from home to read to their babies too. It is something that we definitely want to build on for next year and our team here at CUMH are very keen to increase our reading encounters even more."

For more information about the Babies with Books Read-a-thon visit: www.babieswithbooks.org

Maternity Services University Hospital Kerry

Celebrating World Patient Safety Day 2021

By Mairin McElligott, Project Lead Maternity Services, UHK

World Patient Safety Day this year focussed on the prioritisation and safety of Maternal and Newborn Care. Maternity Services, University Hospital Kerry were delighted to be able to join colleagues across the globe in achieving the signature mark of the global campaign of lighting up iconic monuments, landmarks, and public places in the colour orange on the 17 September 2021.

World Patient Safety Day – established by the World Health Assembly in 2019 through resolution WHA72.6 on "Global action on patient safety" – is observed annually on 17 September. Objectives of the day are to enhance global understanding of patient safety, increase public engagement in health care safety, and promote global action to prevent and reduce avoidable harm in health care. Each year, a new theme is selected to shed light on a priority

patient safety area where action is needed to reduce avoidable harm in health care and achieve universal health coverage.

Considering the significant burden of harm women and newborns are exposed to due to unsafe care, this year's World Patient Safety Day was dedicated to the need to prioritise and address safety in maternal and newborn care, particularly around the time of childbirth, when most harm occurs. This is especially important in the context of disruption of health services due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has further compounded the situation.

Since women's experiences during childbirth are also affected by issues of gender equity and violence, World Patient Safety Day highlights the important notion of respectful care and its linkages with safety.





Meet Dr Oratile Kgosidialwa

Dr Oratile Kgosidialwa, MB BCH BAO, MRCPI, MSc
Consultant Physician in Endocrinology and Diabetes Mellitus
Endocrinology Lead for Diabetes in Pregnancy for the SSWHG

1. Tell us a little about your role and the breadth of services covered?

In April 2021, I started in my new role as Clinical Lead for the Diabetes in Pregnancy Service in CUMH/SSWHG. This is a new post, and I am very excited to be the first person in this role. I also started my new role in CUH as an Endocrinology Consultant with commitments in both diabetes and endocrinology and general medicine. My roles mean that my time is split 50:50 in CUH and CUMH.

2. What has been your career to date and what attracted you to this job?

As a trainee in the basic specialist training program through the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI), I developed an interest in maternal

diabetes. On completion of my basic training, I completed a clinical research masters in the field of maternal diabetes and published this work in an international peer reviewed journal called the British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology. My interest in both clinical work and research in the area of diabetes in pregnancy was reinforced during this time and I decided to complete a higher specialist training (HST) in Diabetes and Endocrinology.

Upon completion of my HST, I completed an MD under the mentorship of Professor Fidelma Dunne in NUI Galway. This work was focused on improving future research outcome reporting in pregnant women with diabetes in order to improve evidence synthesis in this

field and which will then translate to better outcomes for both mum and baby which is something that I am particularly passionate about.

I find this job interesting and appealing as it provides me with the ability to make meaningful changes to the care of women with diabetes and their babies in SSWHG and Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate.

3. What is new in your area?

There is a lot of interesting developments going on currently within my area. For example, a lot of research is ongoing to determine alternatives to the oral glucose tolerance test (OGTT) to diagnose Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM) and the best management for diabetes during pregnancy. We are in the best position here in CUMH/UCC to contribute to international research in this area.

4. How does COVID-19 affect the way you provide care?

As with all services, changes had to be made to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic ensuring care is delivered in the safest possible way. Prolonged exposure to others had to be curtailed amongst other measures to reduce the spread of the virus. As a result, we had to adapt and an interim diagnostic criteria for GDM had to be introduced during the pandemic. This interim diagnostic criteria involves using fasting glucose and glycated haemoglobin as opposed to the OGTT to diagnose GDM. Some work is already underway to determine what the effect of this change has been on women and their babies.

The prevalence of GDM has remained high despite an alternative diagnostic criteria that would have been expected to reduce prevalence. My colleagues in the multidisciplinary team including dietitians, diabetes midwives, diabetes nurses, obstetricians and other endocrinologists have to be commended for all the hard work over the pandemic period to keep the services running and keeping our patients and staff safe.

5. What are your long term aims and ambitions for this role?

Unfortunately, more than 30 years after the St Vincent's declaration, pregnant women with diabetes and their babies still suffer poor outcomes compared to their counterparts without diabetes. With rising maternal age and obesity rates, we have seen increases in diabetes in pregnancy, particularly type 2 diabetes and gestational diabetes mellitus.

My long-term plan is that any woman with diabetes in the SSWHG will have similar pregnancy outcomes compared to those without diabetes through improvements in pre-pregnancy, antenatal and post-natal care an area that is often neglected. This aim will be made possible by providing training and education to both staff and patients in diabetes, in addition to undertaking meaningful research.

I am delighted to be working with a very strong multidisciplinary team who also wish to ensure that CUMH is a centre of excellence for the provision of care for women with diabetes and their babies.

Double joy: Twins welcome babies on same ward at Cork University Maternity Hospital

(Adapted from an article by Sandra Quinn from The Echo)



Pictured above: Michelle Lewis and Carol Murray with baby Julie and baby Keva.

Having a baby in a pandemic is stressful and lonely, but when you share a maternity ward in CUMH with your twin sister, it becomes a beautiful, special and magical experience. Twins Carol Murray and Michelle Lewis were born half an hour apart weeks earlier than expected, and recently they both welcomed baby girls into the world, both earlier than expected as well and just two days apart. As twins, Carol and Michelle have always been extremely close, so when Carol found out she was pregnant and Michelle told her she wasn't feeling well, she had a feeling her twin was pregnant too.

Originally, they had the same due date, but ended up having their little girls within days of each other. Carol got a call from the hospital to go in because they were concerned.

"I rang Michelle and told her I was going in and she got a bit lonely that I'd be going in without her.

"Then, later on, as I was getting bags ready, she called to say the hospital were concerned about her blood sugars and she was to go in too. Our sister Bridget brought us both in together," Carol said.

On the same night that Carol's waters broke and she was brought for an emergency section, which her husband Conor thankfully arrived in time for, Michelle was being induced and also ended up having an emergency section with her partner Kevin by her side.

Keva Murray was born on October 7 at 1.53am at a weight of 7lb 7oz and Julie Cahill was born on October 9 at 10.47am at a weight of 8lbs.

At the time, visiting was still very much restricted in CUMH and it was a lonely and isolating time for women all over maternity wards, but for Carol and Michelle it was different.

Because it was such a unique situation to have twins in labour at the same time, the midwives put them in the same ward.

"That was a huge consolation for me, because Carol was on her fourth and it was my first baba.

"I was scared of the unknown, but knowing that when I'd have my baby, I'd be going in with my sister and have her to help me, because I wasn't able to have visitors, was a great consolation.

"I can't begin to describe how safe I felt when I had Carol with me.

"Carol was always the protector of the twins, I was always the wild one and always got in trouble and Carol was always the one with a good head on her shoulders," Michelle said.

"I was so convinced hers was a boy, so it was very magical when it was two little girls, and especially when we were twins, it was a huge emotional roller coaster I have to say - I was very happy to have her and it was just amazing," Carol added.

It's a time that we will never get back, it was so magical, so amazing.

"I was on my fourth and I had the experience, but no matter what you are, you're still nervous, still worried and still emotional, but having Michelle there took all that away and then, when I had Keva, I was there to help Michelle out.

"I remember one day, she was up all night with Julie, and she was exhausted, I had Keva settled, and I took Julie, Michelle said she'd manage, but I tucked Julie right next to me. Michelle said to me the peace of mind knowing she could sleep and that Julie was safe, I had her - that's huge, you just don't get that.

"Especially with Covid, it's very lonely, very restrictive, we were only allowed a couple of hours a day with our partners, but we didn't feel it cos we had each other. Even with curtains closed, she'd shout over a question or ask for advice," Carol told WOW! (Women On Wednesday, The Echo publication).

Both of the mothers and their babies are now doing really well at home.

UHK Staff News

By Mairin McElligott

Congratulations to Mairead O'Sullivan

Maternity Services in University Hospital Kerry wish to congratulate Mairead O'Sullivan (Infant Feeding Coordinator/ Neonatal RGN/IBCLC in UHK Tralee) for her nomination for the Lactation Consultant of the Year. A testimony to what an asset Mairead O'Sullivan has been since joining the infant feeding team in UHK, is her ability to inform and empower the women she supports. The IBCLC of the year is 1 of 11 awards that are awarded annually by Friends of Breastfeeding Ireland and sponsored by **Mychild.ie**.



Celebrating the Development of Advanced Practice in Maternity Services

We are celebrating the development of advanced practice in Maternity Services, Joann Malik, Candidate Advance Midwife Practitioner is leading out in women and infants care in the supported care pathway.



Maternity Services UHK Diabetes Clinic

Right: Dr Tom Higgins, Consultant Endocrinologist, Marie Nolan, CNS Diabetes, Majella Mangan, CMS Ultrasonographer, Dr Magid Abubaker, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, Deirdre Colgan, CNS Ultrasonographer.



Maternity Service University Hospital Kerry (UHK) includes a Medical/Antenatal Clinic in association with a Consultant Endocrinologist and Clinical Nurse Specialist in Diabetes. The number of women attending the clinic has been steadily increasing; feedback from service users is of great importance to healthcare providers so as to identify what is working well and what requires further improvement.

A woman attending the services kindly spoke about her experiences though her journey in Medical/Antenatal Clinic in UHK. Claire explained how she felt following her diagnosis of Type 1 diabetes 6 months after having gestational diabetes.

“I was admitted to the hospital, which was quite scary at the time, my Nurse explained all about the condition and showed me how to administer my insulin and how to use blood glucose monitoring equipment. I am very grateful for the care and education that the Diabetic Team gave me at the time of my diagnosis.”

The service supports women throughout their pregnancy journey, evident by how Claire feels regarding her care: “I had amazing care throughout my pregnancy, and I was monitored every week with my Diabetic Nurse, after the birth of my daughter my diabetes seemed to have resolved.”

Claire reports following the birth of her daughter she remained diabetes free, however Claire then describes the familiar signs that she noticed: “I started having symptoms again, thirst and cramps, I had remembered these symptoms from before, but I was in denial.

I met my Diabetic Nurse who looked after me throughout my pregnancy who asked me to have my bloods taken, the very next day I was put back on insulin this time for life the honeymoon period was over, and I was diagnosed as Type 1.”

When planning her second child Claire was again able to access the Medical/Antenatal Clinic UHK, explaining: “When I was planning my second child, I was very concerned about my pregnancy with Type 1 diabetes and the care I was given was above and beyond, I was given the chance apply for the Fibre Libre Sensor which changed my life dramatically with monitoring my diabetes, since having the sensor it gave me a better understanding of my sugar levels with different foods being able to see the spikes and lows. Since having the sensor, I have been able to educate my family and friends and show them with the app the lows and highs to give them a better insight to diabetes.”

Maternity Services UHK continues to aim to guide, advocate for and support women and their families throughout their journey within the service. We aspire to be renowned in the provision of excellence in our care, to ensure that their hopes and expectations are met throughout their experience. Supporting a multidisciplinary, bespoke, women centred and holistic service. Claire wishes to thank:

“I am very grateful for the help, care and the emotional support that I receive by the Diabetic Team in University Hospital Kerry, no question is a silly question to ask, they have helped me come to terms with my long-term illness.”

Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate supports training of over 1,200 people to help in the fight against COVID-19

By Stephen O'Connor, Finance Manager



Above: Classroom setup in Brookfield, UCC.

In the period from January to October of 2021, Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate provided funding for training of 1,217 people in both Basic Life Support (BLS) and Anaphylaxis training, in collaboration with Critical Care Training and UCC. An initial target of 500 people was the aim; the programme surpassed this target and proved to be of huge success within the South South-West Hospital Group (SSWHG).

The initiative covered the full Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate and more. A broad spectrum of professionals availed of the training across various training locations (view table opposite).

Training Locations:

- Brú Columbanus, Wilton Cork.
- Brookfield UCC, Cork.
- Charleville Park Hotel, Charleville, Cork.
- Westlodge Hotel, Bantry, Cork.
- Springfort Hall Hotel, Mallow, Cork.
- Meadowlands Hotel Tralee, Kerry.
- Brehon Hotel Killarney, Kerry.
- Kenmare Bay Hotel, Kenmare, Kerry.
- Hotel Minella, Clonmel, Tipperary.
- Granville Hotel, Waterford.

Key elements to training:

Undertaking any training program aimed at the diverse needs of so many different healthcare professionals is challenging at any time. To do so under urgent time constraints, with the twin challenges of an ongoing pandemic and at one stage a cyber-attack was unique. The logistics around safe training in a pandemic situation, and even identifying suitable venues that are able to accommodate safely the numbers needed to train during a national lockdown, was also a challenge. Our training partners, CUMH staff, Critical Care training and UCC all stepped up to the mark and provided tailored sessions for the needs identified.

Bookings were taken, time slots allocated, training provided, certificates awarded. The professionals who undertook the training received certified Basic Life Support, Intramuscular Injection technique, Anaphylaxis recognition and management training. The training model had to be agile and flexible to enable delivery of cost effective, timely, high quality targeted training, based on clinical need, to a broad spectrum of Health Care Professionals. All

who walked out the door after training could now safely help fight against COVID-19.

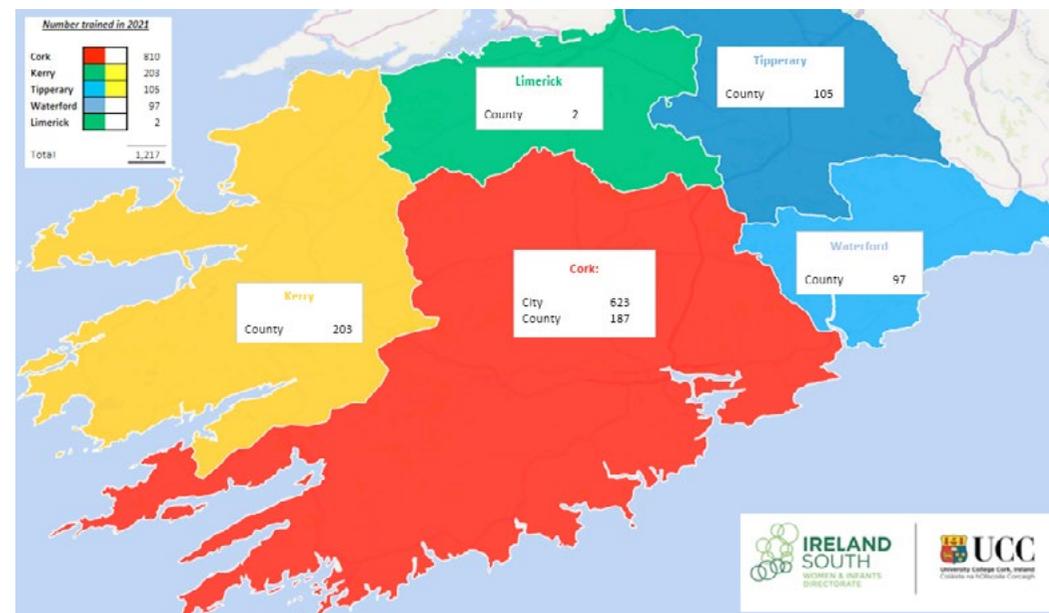
Our main training partner Fiona Barton of Critical Care Training said *“To our candidates who, despite the heavy clinical caseloads they carry in their day-to-day work, were so positive, engaged and keen to learn. It was an honour and pleasure to meet and work with them all.”*



Above: Padraig Barton and Fiona Barton, owners of CCT.

Basic Life Support (BLS) & Anaphylaxis training delivered to a broad spectrum of workers.

Acute Hospital	Hospital based Consultant	Hospital based NCHDs	Acute Hospital based Nursing and Midwifery staff all grades.	Medical/Nursing/Physiotherapy/ Dental/ Pharmacy/Optomety students
Public Health	Public Health Doctors	Public Health Nurses		
Primary Care	General Practitioners	Practice Nurses		
Long Term Care	Community Hospital Nursing staff	Nursing home Nursing staff		
Dental	Dentists			
Allied Health Care Professionals	Physiotherapists	Pharmacists		
Others	Army professionals	Ambulance professionals	Retired professionals	



Above: Training Graph.



Staff peer-to-peer protection against seasonal flu

In conversation with Fiona Kirby, CUMH Midwifery Practice Development Coordinator

Each year as we approach winter, it is very important to prepare for the upcoming flu season. The Irish flu season starts in September or October and it peaks in December or January. A demanding flu season alongside the COVID-19 pandemic places increasing strain on our healthcare system and by getting the vaccination, we can reduce the impact of seasonal flu for all.

We have a duty of care to protect our patients, our colleagues and our communities against the latest strain of influenza and starting in October, seasonal flu vaccination clinics commenced at CUMH. To date, 10 clinics have run

with over 440 seasonal flu vaccines administered in a peer-to-peer vaccination programme. Any staff member who availed of a seasonal flu vaccine also received a branded Ireland South mask and had the chance to enter a draw for an iPad.

This year, we are building on the success of the 2020/2021 seasonal flu vaccination programme where there was a fantastic uptake of 86%. This was a marked improvement on the 2019/2020 programme when there was a 38% uptake of vaccines. In fact, CUMH achieved an award for '2nd Best Improvement in Vaccine uptake in a Hospital setting' for the 2020/2021 flu season.

This year we are aiming for even higher uptake, so if you have not yet had a seasonal flu vaccine, please consider the benefits carefully and watch out for further communications around clinics.



Pictured top: Gráinne Fitzgerald, Student Public Health Nurse receives her vaccination from Mary Cullinane, Nurse and Peer Vaccinator Neonatal Unit. **Above:** CUMH received an award to mark 2nd Best Improvement in Vaccine uptake in a Hospital setting.



Update on Ireland South's Innovation Programme

Left: Caitriona Heffernan, Innovation Lead.

By Caitriona Heffernan, Innovation Lead, Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate

Caitriona Heffernan, Innovation Lead has been in her current role for six months and is busy with lots of activities. Read on for a taste of some of the activity to date.

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?

Innovation Framework development for Ireland South

Following spending some time getting a sense of the 'business' of the organisation, as well as examining the vision around her Innovation Lead role and talking to staff on the ground about their understanding and experience of innovation, Caitriona created a first iteration of the current working framework for the Innovation Programme (see diagram on next page).

The framework is based around seven pillars where each pillar represents a key component of the Innovation Programme. This framework has guided the Innovation Programme work to date and it will be adapted as the programme grows and evolves.

The most successful innovation programmes are those embedded within an organisation and Caitriona is keen to

engage with more staff over the coming months to inform the next evolution of the framework. She is passionate about co-production and believes that people care about the things that they create, and she is keen that the innovation framework will support a co-produced programme going forward.

Future Focus Event

In late October, 13 of our colleagues from across the Directorate participated in our first 'Future Focus' event. The event was



Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate Innovation Framework

created in collaboration with the Health Innovation Hub Ireland and 4 companies/entrepreneurs were given the opportunity to pitch their ideas for innovative products to our panel of clinical experts for their feedback. It was very exciting to be part of this early concept validation stage and it's wonderful to think that staff at Ireland South are contributing to the development of new technologies that will benefit the women and infants of the future. It is hoped that this event will be repeated in 2022 so watch this space for your opportunity to participate.

Innovation 'Lunchtime Launchpad' Speaker Series

This series of events marked Irish Public Sector Innovation Week. It was originally planned to host a live, one-day innovation conference, but COVID-19 necessitated a move online and the learning series ran during lunchtime slots in November. Nearly 400 people registered to attend the events which were hosted in collaboration with the Spark Innovation

Programme. Topics covered included 'Design Thinking', 'Effectual Innovation' and 'Innovation in the context of clinical need'. Feedback on the series has been excellent. Each talk has been recorded and all staff across the Directorate will shortly have access to the recordings.

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW?

Launch of the 'Challenges and Solutions Portal'

The challenges and solutions portal is live and accessible across the Directorate. It's a place where staff can flag problems in search of a solution or identify ideas, they have to solve a problem encountered in their work.

Getting an idea of the greatest challenges we experience and as well as the kinds of novel solutions that staff would like to highlight is very important. When our challenges and potential solutions come together in one place, we can get a sense of emerging themes around

the challenges we face. This can allow us to identify common problems, in different areas with potential to be solved through one innovation. It can also allow for identification of ideas that meet with the high priority needs of the organisation and as well as linking staff from across the Directorate who may be interested in working on a challenge together.

Find out more by accessing the challenges and solutions portal via the QR code opposite.



Challenges & Solutions Portal

WHAT'S HAPPENING NEXT?

Women and Infant Health Care Hackathon

Plans are underway to hold the first Women and Infant 'Health Hackathon' event in Ireland in March 2022. It will be a one-and-a-half-day event, held over a Friday and Saturday when a diverse group of people will come together to solve real life healthcare challenges relating to women and infant health. The idea is to demonstrate what can happen when a diverse group of people with specific skill sets are challenged to rapidly work on a healthcare problem in a supported environment.

Participants will hear about the challenges that have been selected to be worked on and will work in teams to create viable, user centric solutions. The Hackathon will be facilitated by experts in Design Thinking Methodology and will be delivered in a sprint format, allowing for fast movement and lots of learning.

The event will end with a 'big pitch' where teams will present their solutions and the winning idea will be selected by a panel of judges.

There has been great interest to date from our external partners. Colleagues at UCC, MTU, Tyndall Institute, Health Innovation Hub Ireland, Republic of Work and Cork City Council have already committed to participate in the event. We will invite staff from across the Directorate, students from UCC and some patients and service users to join us too. The Hackathon will be an engaging event to tackle 'wicked problems' in a new and creative way.

To contact Caitriona about anything you have read in this article or to find out more about the Innovation Programme, please email caitriona.heffernan@hse.ie or call her on 085 1441758.

An Update from MaternityONESouth

By Kate Lyons, Project Lead

2022 brings an exciting change to staff working in the Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate. As you are aware, MaternityONESouth has been working on a project on the Development of a Quality Management Information System (QMIS). We have brought the maternity, gynaecology and neonatal policies, procedure, protocols and guidelines (PPPGs) together from CUMH, UHK, TUH and UHW into a central repository. The PPG Library will be accessible in the Q-Pulse Knowledge Portal.

Staff will also be able to record attendance at training by simply scanning their ID badges. This will update their individual training records and reminders will be sent out automatically when training is due for renewal. Managers will be able to view real-time analysis of policy and procedure activity and training compliance within the services using the business intelligence tool QualSIP.

HCI has been working with us to develop the Q-Pulse Knowledge Portal; they have specific expertise in the development and implementation of quality and safety management information systems in healthcare organisations. They will provide education and training sessions which are currently being scheduled for January 2022 and the Q-Pulse system will be live immediately following the training. Most general user training sessions will take 45 minutes and training will be online. Line managers and heads of departments will have slightly longer sessions.

We will send out an email to all staff in the coming weeks with a timetable and links to these training sessions. There will also be a HCI support desk available Monday-Friday, 09.00-17.00, and they can be contacted by phone on 0818 424 999 or email at support@hci.care should you need help.

The project is being overseen by Kate Lyons, Katie Bourke, Miriam Lyons, Karen McNamara

(all CUMH), Mary O'Donnell and Sinead Heaney (TUH), Mairin McElligott and Mary Stack Courtney (UHK), Linda O'Callaghan and Marie Murtagh (UHW) and Pearse McLellan (ICT Technical Services Manager (CUH). We will keep staff informed and will notifying you shortly with dates for the education and training sessions and advice on how you can attend. No booking will be required in advance. In the meantime, any queries in relation to the project can be directed to me, Kate Lyons, Project Team Lead on kate.lyons1@hse.ie or by phone on 087 7818063.

Work is continuing with other workflows as part of MaternityONESouth. We are developing Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate (ISWID) Obstetric and Neonatal emergency policies, procedure, protocols and guidelines (PPPGs) to standardise the care we provide to women and babies in the Directorate, regardless of geographical location. We will also see the development and implementation of a training strategy for all staff working in the Directorate to in dealing with emergencies. 2022 looks bright, and we are committed to improving the quality of care we deliver to families in Cork, Kerry, Tipperary and Waterford and to supporting our staff in their efforts.



Above: Scanning ID cards.

WORLD PREMATURETY DAY

World Prematurity Day is observed each year on 17 November. The objective of the day is to highlight awareness of preterm birth and the challenges associated for both infants and their families. One in ten babies is born premature worldwide.

Every year, across the Directorate our teams shine a light on World Prematurity Day and this year was no different.

Throughout the day, tweets were shared to support our preterm infant families and showcase the multidiscipline teams in the Directorate that care for our preterm infants. New World Prematurity Day pull

up banners were produced and displayed in each hospital/unit. At UHW, the team launched their Breast Milk Expressing Diary and both UHK and CUMH lit up with purple lighting to mark this important day in the calendar.

Due to COVID-19, it wasn't possible for CUMH NNU to hold their traditional coffee World Prematurity Day coffee morning, but some tasty cupcakes were available on site to mark the occasion. Thank you to our teams throughout the Directorate who care for our preterm babies and work so hard to support their families too.



Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate @IrelandSout... · Nov 17
The old saying is true, "It takes a village to raise a child". We are proud of our multidiscipline Neonatal Team at #CUMH who work hard caring for the preterm babies born here and supporting their families through their neonatal journey #WorldPrematurityDay @Irishneonatal



Univ Hosp Waterford @UHW_Waterford · Nov 17
UHW Maternity & Neonatal Services celebrating #WorldPrematurityDay2021 with launch of Expressed Breast Milk Diary @IrelandSouthWID @UHW_Waterford



University Hospital Kerry @hospital_kerry · Nov 17
World Prematurity Day 2021 "Born Too Soon"



INFANT Centre update – AI4Life

By Eoghan McKernan

The INFANT Centre's AI4Life team was one of 6 teams nationally shortlisted and funded over 2020 and 2021 to compete in Science Foundation Ireland's AI for Societal Good Challenge. The Challenge, as well as the INFANT team's AI-4-Life solution, featured in the documentary *Science To The Rescue* on RTÉ on 10 November and is currently featured on the RTÉ website. www.rte.ie/lifestyle/living/2021/1112/1259533-science-to-the-rescue-ai-technology-for-fetal-wellbeing/

The AI4Life team, led by Professor Liam Marnane, Professor Geraldine Boylan and Dr Mairead O'Riordan, is harnessing Artificial Intelligence to address the challenge of improving intrapartum fetal monitoring. Intrapartum fetal monitoring is used during labour to identify oxygen deprivation to the fetal brain and to help reduce the risk of neonatal morbidity and mortality. Lack of oxygen at birth is responsible for 23% of all deaths in full-term infants

worldwide and approximately 1.15 million infants survive with significant disability. Interpretation of the fetal heart trace can be challenging in the busy labour room environment.

The AI4LIFE team is developing a novel, easy to interpret, fetal monitoring system, that will use artificial intelligence (AI) assisted interpretation. Other clinical data will also be used to enhance decision making. It is hoped that by enabling a more accurate assessment of fetal wellbeing during labour, the prevalence of oxygen deprivation to the fetal brain may be reduced. The team is developing a software algorithm to simplify interpretation of data, guiding clinicians on the appropriate intervention. Machine learning is used to train the algorithm to identify patterns in the data that suggest the baby is not tolerating labour as well as expected. The AI4LIFE project has the potential to impact current clinical practice and significantly reduce neonatal morbidity and mortality.

This project is funded by Science Foundation Ireland and Enterprise Ireland.



Above: Image on RTÉ website.



Above: CTG Monitoring.



Cork University Maternity Hospital



University Hospital Kerry



University Hospital Waterford



Tipperary University Hospital

Have you got a story?

If you have a story for a future issue of **UltraNews** we would love to hear from you!

Please contact **Louise Riordan** on email Louise.Riordan@ucc.ie

Articles for inclusion in the next newsletter must be submitted no later than **15th February 2022**.



Seirbhís Sláinte
Níos Fearr
á Forbairt

Building a
Better Health
Service