



Dear Colleagues

Spring officially started on Sunday, March 20th coinciding with a very special ceremony held in the Garden of Remembrance.

The commemoration service 'Ireland Remembers' was an opportunity to pause and remember those that we have loved and lost during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was a very poignant event and I am proud to say our hospital was represented by Fr. John Kelly, Director of Pastoral Care who was involved in organising the national event.

I would also like to acknowledge the brief ceremony that we held and recorded at our own beautiful COVID-19 Heart Memorial, the short service can be reviewed back via this [link](#).

The new season also sees changes in the Executive Management Team with the appointment of Dr. Ronan Desmond appointed as Clinical Director of the Laboratory Directorate and Dr. John Feeney as Clinical Director of the Radiology Directorate.

The first three months of the year continue to be extremely busy in our Emergency Department with attendances for the first three months up by 13% compared to previous years. We are committed to treating everyone who presents to our ED however given the volume of patients attending the Emergency Department, we regret there are lengthy delays and long wait times for those who do not need urgent treatment.

Best wishes

Lucy Nugent
Chief Executive
Tallaght University Hospital

Funding Secured to Develop a Cutting Edge New Smartphone App

TUH research has shown that Ireland has among the highest numbers in Europe of those suffering from chronic pancreatitis. The Hospitals Interdisciplinary Chronic Pancreatitis Service, TU Dublin, Innovation team and Trinity College Dublin have successfully applied and received funding for a new app.

The app will enable the Hospital to care for patients in their homes and communities, aligning with TUH's vision of being a hospital without walls, it will also be the first ever digital tool of its type to help those suffering from chronic pancreatitis.

The new SmartCP app will enable patients with chronic pancreatitis to report red flags like worsening malabsorptive symptoms and signs of new diabetes so that doctors can intervene earlier to achieve better outcomes. Those who suffer from this particular condition have a higher-than-normal risk of developing pancreatic cancer, and therefore the detection of red-flag pancreatic cancer symptoms would allow for crucial early diagnosis and treatment.

The project will be coordinated by Professor Kevin Conlon Consultant Surgeon at TUH and Professor of Surgery at Trinity College Dublin and Dr. Sinead Duggan, a Senior Research Fellow in Trinity College Dublin. You can read more about the announcement via this [link](#).



Pictured from left to right following the announcement of the successful application for funding are from left to right Dr. Barry Feeney, Head of Department of Computing at TU Dublin Tallaght Campus ; Professor Kevin Conlon, Consultant Surgeon at TUH & Professor of Surgery at Trinity College Dublin; Dr. Sinead Duggan, Senior Research Fellow in Trinity College Dublin; Marie Egan, Clinical Nurse Specialist at TUH; Dr. Natalie Cole, Head of Innovation at TUH and Dr. Hannah O'Keefe, Innovation Registrar at TUH

New Community Service for Cardiac Rehabilitation

Community based Cardiac Rehabilitation (CR) is a new development for TUH and it is a safe and effective method of delivering an integrated cardiac rehabilitation programme, while reducing large waiting lists for this patient cohort. Patient satisfaction demonstrated almost 100% satisfaction with the new service.

CR is recommended as part of the management of patients following a cardiac event. Evidence shows that CR exercise and education programmes including psychological support improve patient's prognosis, reduce hospital re-admission rates and improve psychological well-being.

Due to the COVID 19 Pandemic, CR services closed, with staff redeployed to acute healthcare settings. As a result, the waiting list grew extensively. In order to achieve the required social distancing, capacity in the Hospital CR gym was reduced by 60%, augmenting patients waiting time. Alternative methods of delivery, outside of a hospital setting were examined. The primary aim was to provide a CR programme for patients post their cardiac event in a timely manner, and in a safe environment.

Liaising with hospital management, a community venue was secured to deliver an integrated CR programme which commenced on the 30th March 2021. Patients attended community CR exercise classes twice per week, over an eight week period coordinated by the CR nursing staff and physiotherapist.

Patient education was delivered by the multidisciplinary team using the zoom platform.

Pre-assessment and risk stratification enables patients on the waiting list to be prioritised, with higher risk patients who require telemetry monitoring exercising in the hospital setting, and low risk patients having quicker access to a community setting.

The community setting also facilitates ease of transition to an ongoing supervised exercise programme currently sponsored by the HSE and operating in the same facility.

The CR programme was delivered safely and effectively, with adherence to standard operating procedures, devised in accordance with the hospital policy and CR procedure protocol.

Positive feedback from patient satisfaction questionnaires demonstrated 97% satisfaction with location and 100% with staff and delivery of the service.



Caroline Edgeworth, Physiotherapist taking patients through their paces at the Cardiac Rehabilitation Classes in the community

New Member of the TUH Team

The Hospital recently welcomed Professor Susan Smith who has joined the Discipline of Public Health & Primary Care as Professor of General Practice. This is a joint appointment between TCD and Tallaght University Hospital. Her research interests include chronic disease, medicines management and multimorbidity and she is leading a HRB Collaborative Doctoral Award in Multimorbidity, working on studies addressing a range of challenges in multimorbidity.

Her research aligns closely with the Hospital's focus on improving patient care through enhanced integration of care and more effective collaboration across the primary specialty care interface. The Hospital recognises the strategic importance of its partnership with General Practice and the TCD Institute of Population Health.



Dr. Susan Smith

Unique Irish Study Published

The NH-COVAIR study is an important piece of research that provides support for the use of COVID-19 vaccine boosters in nursing home residents to prevent serious illness. Nursing home residents are frequently excluded from translational research, but as we know they are the population at greatest risk of morbidity and mortality from COVID-19 illness."

Recruitment for the study (NH-COVAIR) was carried out through existing links between Age-Related Healthcare (ARHC) in TUH and five local nursing homes.

NH-COVAIR was supported by funding from a COVID-19 rapid response call from the Meath Foundation, and this is now the second paper (with more under review) to emerge from the NH-COVAIR Study.

The lead author on the current study is Dr. Adam Dyer (Specialist Registrar in Geriatric Medicine & Irish Clinical Academic Training Fellow, TUH & TCD) and the study Principal Investigators were Professor Sean Kennelly Consultant Geriatrician & Clinical Associate Professor, TUH & TCD) and Dr Nollaig Bourke (Ussher Assistant Professor in Trinity's School of Medicine).



Pictured left to right Dr. Adam Dyer (Specialist Registrar in Geriatric Medicine & Irish Clinical Academic Training Fellow, TUH & TCD) and Professor Sean Kennelly Consultant Geriatrician & Clinical Associate Professor, TUH & TCD

New Beds

We can all appreciate the challenge for patients in being comfortable in a bed that is not their own and also the importance of the patient being in the correct type of bed and on the right mattress.

Following a comprehensive review of the beds / mattresses in the Hospital and the needs of patients, a small working group reviewed different options and recommended going to market to review a Total Bed Management solution.

Crampton Ward was the first ward to receive the new beds and there was great excitement from both the Nurses and Patients. The Patients were delighted they could position their own bed. The appointment of one company means the Hospital staff are no longer having to manage multiple contacts / suppliers and ensures that at all times patients are in the best type of bed. It will also reduce the time spent on ordering beds, reporting faults and there will no longer be the need to move a patient from one type of bed to another.

The new beds have a high specification mattress resulting in improved Patient comfort and reducing pressure which will help with the prevention of pressure ulcers.

These are hybrid mattresses so if pressure relief needs to be upgraded a small pump can be added which saves the Patient having to be moved off one mattress onto another.

Patients have more independence by having access to control buttons so they can change their position enhancing their mobility and comfort.

The Hospital is the first public hospital in the Republic of Ireland to completely change their bed management to a Total Bed Management system.



Cathy Doyle CNM 2 Crampton Ward; Helen Strapp, ANP tissue Viability; James Gargan, Commercial Director Beechfield Healthcare Ltd; Áine Lynch, Director of Nursing & Integrated Care; Stuart O Connor, Contracts & Procurement Manager and Patricia Morrison Directorate Perioperative Nurse Manager

TUH Join National Orthopaedic Register

TUH has become the 10th hospital in Ireland to roll out the Irish National Orthopaedic Register (INOR) the aim of this initiative is to monitor and improve the quality of care for individuals receiving joint replacement surgery in Ireland.

INOR is a secure, web-based, real-time system which provides a national electronic register of patients receiving joint replacement surgery in Ireland. Elective orthopaedic hip and knee replacement records will now be available nationally in a central register for the first time.

The register will collate information from TUH and will support early detection of implant performance and improve the efficiency of the recall and review process.

Over the past four months, much work was undertaken by the local TUH implementation team for INOR in conjunction with the INOR national team to ensure implementation readiness across all relevant areas of the Hospital.

Lucy Nugent, Chief Executive has welcomed the implementation, saying "As a teaching hospital, we never stop looking at how we can learn and improve the care that we provide to our patients. I would like to acknowledge the efforts of my colleagues across surgery with NOCA to roll out INOR at TUH and look forward to the improvements we can make to enhance our patient's healthcare journey."

Volunteer Services

Volunteering has been a core Value of TUH since we opened our doors in 1998. Some services were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic with new services put in place and our Volunteers have continued to support the Hospital throughout the pandemic.

In 2022 we plan on expanding our Volunteer Services. If you know someone who would be interested in Volunteering and have four hours a week to dedicate to the service we would love to hear from them. They can contact the Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS) on 01 414 4709 or pals@tuh.ie.



Noel, one of our longstanding Meet, Greet & Escort Volunteers that helps patients check in for their outpatient appointment and if necessary escort them to the clinic

TUH becomes a European Reference Network site for Rare Neurological & Immune Disease

Rare diseases are those affecting less than five people in 10,000 population. With more than 6,000 individual rare diseases, approximately 300,000 people are living with a rare disease in Ireland.

The low prevalence of individual diseases means that no single centre, or even country, can have expertise in all rare diseases. Patients with rare conditions, and their families, often face barriers to diagnosis and treatment due to lack of available expertise. This “diagnostic odyssey” may involve visits to multiple physicians and (particularly in small island nations like Ireland) international journeys to specialist centres.

In 2017, a number of European Reference Networks (ERNs) were launched connecting more than 900 healthcare units across 26 countries within the EU, to improve access to expertise in rare, complex diseases and thereby improve healthcare quality, reduce inequalities of access, and increase medical expertise across the EU. In 2019, Prof. Sinead Murphy, on behalf of the Irish Consortium for Rare Neurological Disorders (including members from within TUH & CHI), and Prof. Mark Little on behalf of the Tallaght Vasculitis & Allergy Group and Vasculitis Ireland Network, submitted applications to join ERNRND and ERN-RITA respectively.

This process was supported by the Adelaide Health Foundation and the office of the Deputy CEO John Kelly, Mary Hickey and Pamela O'Neill (who project managed the application).

After a long and rigorous assessment, both applications were approved by the European Commission ERN Board of Member States and, as of 1st January 2022, TUH has been a recognised site of expertise for ERN-RND (Rare Neurological Diseases) and ERN-RITA (Rare Immunological Disorders).

It is anticipated, due to the relatively small Irish population, that there will only be one site in Ireland for each ERN. This is a significant achievement for the health service, TUH and for individuals and families affected with rare diseases. Care for patients with these rare disorders can now expect to receive coordinated, patient-centred care from diagnosis to treatment and follow up, and to be part of a European Network that sets the standard for care and ensures excellence in all facets of the rare disease care pathway.



Pictured from left to right Prof. Mark Little and Prof. Sinead Murphy and who worked with Pamela O'Neill to apply to the ERN-RND and ERN-RITA along with the support of John Kelly, Deputy CEO and Mary Hickey, Process Improvement Manager

Critical Care Nursing

Minister Donnelly, along with Derek Cribbin the National Nurse Lead for Critical Care; Eileen Whelan, Chief Director of Nursing & Midwifery, Dublin Midlands Hospital Group; Áine Lynch, Director of Nursing & Integrated Care met with members of the Critical Care Nursing team at TUH where he heard about the innovative recruitment strategy being embraced by the Nursing staff in the Critical Care Unit in TUH.

In response to the national shortage of critical care nurses, the Critical Care Clinical Facilitators in TUH ICU developed a novel 12-week supernumerary New Graduate Nurse in Critical Care Education Programme. This innovation in clinical practice involves a blended approach to student learning including theoretical lecture content from clinical experts, clinical skills workshops and high-fidelity simulation for consolidation of student learning.

Following completion of the New-Graduate Programme, new graduate nurses will be encouraged to progress along the National Critical Care Nurse Career Pathway including the completion of the National Foundation Module in Critical Care and Post Graduate Specialist Education Programme.

By developing this programme the first of its type in the country, the Hospital are future proofing their workforce, thus protecting their patients' needs by delivering high-quality, evidence-based patient centred care. And providing a working environment which is supportive and dynamic in nature.

The Minister welcomed this innovative approach, which clearly demonstrates how creativity and a shared vision can provide solutions to the challenges our health service is facing in ensuring there is adequate expertise developed for the increasing demands in our health service, in this case for critical care nursing.



Pictured from left to right Sinead Gill, Clinical Facilitator, Critical Care; Shauna Delaney, Clinical Facilitator, Critical Care; Lisa Dunne, CNM 3 Critical Care; Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly TD; Niamh Skehan, Graduate Staff Nurse; Critical Care; Áine Lynch, Director of Nursing & Integrated Care; Fiona Whelehan, Graduate Staff Nurse; Eileen Whelan, Chief Director of Nursing & Midwifery & Quality, DMHG; Derek Cribbin, Nurse Lead National Clinical Programme for Critical Care and Patricia Morrison, Directorate Nurse Manager TUH



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