

Connect



Quarterly Newsletter for GPs

Issue 5 - Autumn 2016



Dear Colleagues

Welcome to the Autumn addition of Connect which I hope you find both useful and informative.

As the seasons change the Hospital is at an advanced stage of planning for the upcoming busy winter period.

We have submitted our winter plan to create additional bed capacity to the HSE and await their response. There is also ongoing engagement with our primary and social care colleagues to minimise delayed discharges and maximise home care packages to ensure patients are cared for in the most appropriate setting to meet their needs. This is against a backdrop of sustained increase in our Emergency Department attendances (up 9.5% year to date).

The Hospital is delighted to publish its 2015 annual report "People Caring for People" which can be found on our relaunched website. We would also welcome your feedback on the relaunched website and areas for improvement.

As advised in the last newsletter the GP Liaison Committee are exploring ways to enhance our joint ways of working to improve patient experience and outcomes. An update on this work will be provided in the next newsletter.

As always if you have any feedback please email us at GPConnect@amnch.ie.

Kind Regards

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Tallaght Hospital
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Infection Prevention Control Update

We are currently treating a number of adult in-patients diagnosed with Carbapenem Resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE). Most of these patients are carriers of this bacteria as opposed to having an active CRE infection.

It is important that you understand what these organisms are and what this result can mean for your patient. This is a particularly resistant organism that can be challenging to treat and can cause outbreaks in nursing homes and hospitals. In general, patients with CRE at home pose an extremely low risk to healthy family members. Standard precautions, hand hygiene and normal cleaning are sufficient infection control procedures for the home.

To help us contain the transfer of CRE we would ask for your help in the following scenarios.

SCENARIO #1: If you have a patient that you know is carrying CRE and is coming into hospital for admission then please advise the duty microbiologist via switchboard as we will endeavour to ensure the correct infection control measures are taken and we will be able to provide antimicrobial advice if an infection is suspected.

SCENARIO #2: If you are referring the patient to the Emergency Department then please reference their CRE status on the referral letter which they will hand in at reception upon their arrival. Again this enables our staff to ensure the correct infection control measures are taking during their care.

There is a comprehensive suite of information materials available from the Health Protection Surveillance Unit on CRE for GP's and for patients which can be accessed through this [link](#).

If you have any further questions please contact: Dr Jérôme Fennell, Consultant in Clinical Microbiology, Tallaght Hospital.

Website Makeover



www.tallaghthospital.ie

A revised website for the Hospital went public at the end of August and is proving very popular with patients and the GP Community. The redesign was carried out following feedback from staff, patients and members of our Patient Community Advisory Council. The new layout and colour scheme make the website more navigable for users and easier to read across all mobile devices. There is a dedicated Healthcare Professional section on the homepage providing the most commonly used information by Healthcare Professionals i.e. pages on Blood Tests, details on how to refer a patient, department details and useful contacts and information.

“See and Treat” at Tallaght Hospital

Following discussion at the GP Liaison Committee, a pilot for a new way of treating routine skin lesions, lumps and bumps has been developed.

The new process, led by Ms. Amy Gillis (New Consultant General Surgeon) in Tallaght, should allow access for patients to have their moles and cysts seen and, where appropriate, removed all at the same appointment. It would involve just one visit to the hospital for patients and affords GPs a process to send their patients for surgery just as easy as sending them for a blood test.

The process is adapted from a NHS model and is being supported by the National Clinical Programme in Surgery, a HSE/RCSI initiative as well as the Outpatient Clinical programme. It involves a pro-forma referral followed by seeing the patient in a convenient evening clinic where the lesion is reviewed by the surgeon and the operation, if needed, takes place there and then.

The patient can then follow up with their GP with the histology which will be forwarded to the GP clinic, similar to the process around minor ops at the moment. In essence, the see and treat model is a natural evolution to a more efficient model for both patient and doctor. The GPs in the Tallaght Hospital Liaison Committee are instrumental in the design of the process and will work through the pilot with Ms. Gillis. Further details on the sustained model adopted will be provided in a later edition of the Connect.



Launch of three year Clinical Services Strategy

Tallaght Hospital's Clinical Services Strategy has been launched, setting out our service development priorities up to 2018.

Caring for the Future aims to achieve improved health outcomes for our patients. It is based on an analysis of the care the hospital currently provides and how that model of care should best evolve against a backdrop of changing demographic patterns and the implementation of Group structures.

The Strategy is based on five key pillars which support our strengths in clinical specialties and our academic links to Trinity College Dublin: Acute Care Services; Trauma Services; Specialist Surgical Services; Specialist Medical Services and Paediatric Urgent Care Services.

Commenting on the launch of the Strategy, Dr. Catherine Wall, Lead Clinical Director at Tallaght Hospital said: "I welcome the publication of this document, which provides a clear direction for staff, stakeholders and of course patients on the direction Tallaght Hospital will take between now and 2018. It is a transparent and coherent plan, which gives our colleagues a stronger sense of identity within the Group and paves the way for improving their ability to work collaboratively towards a common set of goals which will in turn help them to better care for our patients." A full copy of the Clinical Services Strategy can be found through this [link](#).



Making History

A member of our nursing team Helen Connaughton has recently become the first ever Clinical Nurse Specialist in the area of Inherited Cardiac Conditions marking a very important milestone for cardiology and nursing services nationally and in Tallaght Hospital.

As the first Irish Clinical Nurse Specialist in this field, Helen is now a national leader in this area and demonstrates the investment and advancements that have taken place in cardiac services at Tallaght Hospital. The Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY) unit aims to provide comprehensive specialist evaluation of those diagnosed with or at risk from inherited cardiac conditions, including families who have lost someone to sudden cardiac death. It was developed as a collaboration between Tallaght Hospital, St James's Hospital, St Vincent's University Hospital and Trinity College Dublin and is located at the back of the Hospital.



Helen Connaughton, Ireland's first Clinical Nurse Specialist in Ireland in the area of Inherited Cardiac Conditions

GP USER SURVEY

As part of a quality assurance process in the Dept of Laboratory Medicine a GP User Survey was undertaken in May 2016.

The survey which is part of a quality assurance process and monitors the laboratory services the Hospital offers to our clinical users.

The questionnaire was designed to bring an understanding of levels of satisfaction among the medical community with the quality of service provided by the laboratory medicine department and also to identify opportunities for improvement.

Satisfaction was assessed using a scale of 1-5, (1 = Poor; 5 = Excellent) under the headings of availability of information, turnaround times, meeting clinical need, prompt notification of critical alert values, response to clinical advice and interpretation of results.

85%

of respondents receive results on **Healthlink**



57%

of respondents have access to **Healthmail**

A categorical scale was also used for yes/no type answers to assess information regarding the use of paper reports, reports received through Healthlink and access to Healthmail. Results of the survey were very positive with scores ranging from 3 (Good) to 5 (Excellent) by the majority respondents. It was interesting also to note that 85% of respondents receive results on Healthlink with 57% having access to

Healthmail. Areas for improvement is to raise awareness of the availability of the laboratory user manual on the Hospital internet and sample labelling requirements.

For further information on the survey please contact Ursula Fox. The Department would like to thank all the GPs who took the time to complete and return the surveys.

Bone Health Information

Not many realise the biggest risk factor for a fracture is sustaining a low trauma fracture e.g. a fracture as a result of a fall from standing height!

40% of hip fracture patients have had a previous low trauma fracture. The most common low trauma fractures are wrist, vertebral and shoulder fractures. If patients can put strategies in place to optimise their bone health after they have their first fracture, it may help prevent another fracture.

In 2015 the Fracture Prevention Service at Tallaght Hospital identified 840 low trauma fracture patients over the age of 50. This was an increase of 13% since 2014. The number of low trauma fractures nationally is predicted to continue to increase over the coming years due to the ageing population. By providing bone health education to patients who have sustained a fracture our team can empower patients to help reduce their risk of another fracture.

A new bone health education class has been introduced for patients who have sustained a low trauma fracture. It is a novel service initiative that has been developed by staff from the departments of physiotherapy, nursing, occupational therapy and nutrition and dietetics.

This interactive one-hour class contains provides information on how diet, exercise and falls prevention can reduce your fracture risk. Topics include; age related bone changes, importance of a healthy lifestyle for bone quality and overall health, dietary recommendations (Calcium, Vitamin D, and Protein), specific exercise for bone health, and, most importantly, fall prevention advice.

Local and online bone health resources are also highlighted.

What strategies could prevent the next fracture?

1. Screen for risk factors for osteoporosis
2. Do a falls risk assessment
3. Lifestyle changes e.g. diet and weight-bearing exercise
4. Bone health medication

Held in the physiotherapy department once a month, Patients have found the class beneficial. Currently the class is designed for low trauma fracture patients under the current care of the fracture prevention service and trauma orthopaedics who attend outpatient physiotherapy or occupational therapy. There are plans to expand the class to other patient groups in the future. Audits are scheduled to assess patients' experience of the class.

"I found the bone health education class very beneficial. It gave me insight into my condition and ways and means to manage it in my daily life. These changes are not time consuming or difficult in any respect. I also enjoyed meeting patients with similar challenges to my own".

(Patient Feedback)



Members of the Multidisciplinary Team delivering the class are from left to right are Michelle Fitzgerald, Cliodhna Kelleher, David Askin, Ciara Norton and Sarah O Carroll.

Laboratory Department Update

Phlebotomy

- Waiting times for GP Phlebotomy had been prolonged for several months due to a shortage of Phlebotomists. Following a recruitment campaign this challenge to our service has been resolved and appointments are now available with greater frequency. The GP Bloods Clinic is open from 8.30am-12.30pm and from 1pm-2.30pm taking up to 60 appointments per day they process over 15,000 appointments each year. The appointments in greatest demand are those in the morning for fasting bloods.

Access to Histopathology reports

- A review of procedures for return of reports to GPs was undertaken. Procedures in the day ward and laboratory have been updated and, where appropriate, reports from patients referred for minor surgery will be sent to GPs routinely. Please note that this applies to general surgery only, and not to Dermatology.

DATE FOR THE DIARY

Tallaght Hospital is at the forefront of developments in the Irish hospital system, responding to people's needs on a daily basis. As a large teaching hospital the annual GP Study Day is something our clinicians look forward to each year. On Saturday November 26th the Robert Graves Postgraduate Centre will host Tallaght Hospitals 20th Annual GP Study Day in the Centre for Learning & Development.

Since our GP Study Day last November we have had a number of new consultants appointed in Tallaght Hospital. It is envisaged that we will have involvement from some of the new consultants in this year's Study Day. Whilst the full programme details have yet to be confirmed we wanted to let you know the date for your diaries. Registration will commence at 8.15am with workshops starting at 8.30am and finishing at 1pm. Areas that will be covered include Rheumatology / Respiratory / Dermatology / Paediatrics / Haematology and Age Related Healthcare /Stroke.

Full programme details will be emailed when completed to all GPs on our mailing list. If you like to be added to our GP mailing list then please send your email address to GPConnect@amnch.ie confirming which practice you are from.

The Plenary sessions will be delivered from 1pm-2pm, Professor Paul Ridgway will discuss "The Acute Surgical Assessment Unit" and Dr. Ciara Martin Paediatric Emergency Department Consultant and Paediatric Clinical Director will present on "The New Satellite Centre at Tallaght Hospital. Lunch will be provided.



There is no registration fee and free parking is also provided to the rear of the hospital (not in the multi storey carpark). Details regarding parking are available upon registration. To register or for all other enquiries in relation to this GP Study Day please contact Ms Sandra Daly sandra.daly@amnch.ie 01 414 2883. Please note that application will be submitted for five external CPDS and will be available on the day. We look forward to seeing you on the 26th November!

Celebrating Success

Congratulations is also due to our Pharmacy dispensary team following their win at the Hospital Professional Awards 2016 hosted by HPN Magazine. The team, who developed the Medicines Management Technician (MMT) service, won the Hospital Pharmacy Team of the Year. This award recognises the hard work, dedication and innovation of Ireland's hospital pharmacy staff and multidisciplinary teams in terms of service and care.

Consultant Update

Dr. Allan McCarthy – Consultant Neurologist

Dr. Fergal Kelleher- Consultant Medical Oncologist

Dr. Paul McElwaine – Consultant Physician in Geriatric Medicine

Dr. Anthony O'Connor – Consultant Gastroenterologist

Dr. Dan Ryan – Consultant Physician in Geriatric Medicine

Dr. Seán Kennelly – Consultant Physician in Geriatric Medicine and Community Geriatrics

Ms. Amy Gillis – Consultant General Surgeon

Mr. Arun Thomas – Consultant Urological Surgeon

Upcoming education events available for GPs and Practice Nurses

DATE	DETAIL	CONTACT
18.10.2016	11th Annual Tallaght Hospital Nursing Conference & Clinical Skills Fair "Blended Clinical Skills & Nursing Core Values" Centre for Learning & Development CLD 8.00am – 2.00pm . There is no fee for this event	To book a place please e-mail THNursingconference@amnch.ie
27.10.2016	Venepuncture & Cannulation Clinical Skills - €50 fee 10.00am – 12.00pm . Two Rock Clinical Skills Lab – Centre for Learning & Development	Clodagh McLoughlin Tel: 01 414 2851 clodagh.mcloughlin@amnch.ie
27.10.2016	Radiation Protection Course for Non-Radiology Doctors and Health Care Professionals. €80 fee. 8am – 12.40pm Robert Graves Postgraduate Centre, Centre for Learning & Development	Sinead Fagan Tel: 01 414 3170 Sinead.fagan@amnch.ie
15.11.2016	Venepuncture & Cannulation Clinical Skills - €50 fee. 10.00am – 12.00pm Two Rock Clinical Skills Lab – Centre for Learning & Development	Clodagh McLoughlin Tel: 01 414 2851 clodagh.mcloughlin@amnch.ie
26.11.2016	20th Annual GP Study Day Centre for Learning & Development 8.30am – 2.00pm . Qualifies for 5 CPD points. There is no fee for this event and free parking is provided onsite	Sandra Daly Tel: 01 414 2883 Sandra.daly@amnch.ie
29.11.2016	Venepuncture & Cannulation Clinical Skills - €50 fee 10.00am – 12.00pm Two Rock Clinical Skills Lab – Centre for Learning & Development	Clodagh McLoughlin Tel: 01 414 2851 clodagh.mcloughlin@amnch.ie



If you would like any more information about any articles in the Connect or have suggestions for future editions please do get in touch.

Email: GPConnect@amnch.ie

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