



Dear Colleagues

Happy New Year! I am delighted and honoured to address you for the first time as Chief Executive of Tallaght University Hospital. I have held various nursing & management roles in my career which has provided me with a unique insight into how a hospital works internally and also with its community and the importance of working together as a team.

Although external to the Hospital, the Tallaght-Clondalkin Local Integrated Care Committee is an integral part of the teamwork that has succeeded in creating more effective and efficient services for patients in the area and I look forward to seeing that group develop.

I am delighted in this edition to bring news of a series of developments that are taking place on the campus this year, this follows on from the successful move of our Endocrinology, Diabetic and Podiatry Outpatient clinics to the Simms building last October. The feedback from patients and indeed from staff following this move is extremely positive. As always the Hospital welcomes your feedback.

Best wishes

Lucy Nugent
Chief Executive
Tallaght University Hospital

Capital Developments Update

As part of the ongoing capital development programme on the Hospital Campus we have achieved important progress in the last few months. The details of which are outlined below.

Renal Unit

Further good news for the Hospital, staff and most importantly our patients, is that work has started on the new Renal Dialysis Unit. The aim of the new unit is not just to achieve increased capacity (the number of dialysis stations will increase from 14 to 28) but to enhance the model of care for patients with a particular emphasis on home and self-care, building on our existing status as a home therapies centre. This exciting new development will reaffirm the Hospital's position as the second largest provider of Haemodialysis nationally. The 2,700 m² development which will be located above the current Emergency Department is a capital investment of almost €20m.



Day Surgery Unit

Following the announcement in December regarding further capital developments, the Hospital Board formally signed a lease agreement for the development of an elective day-surgery unit in premises directly across the road from TUH, under the Hospital's governance. This new, innovative development will enable the Hospital to treat a further 6,000 patients a year when fully commissioned. The 34,000 sq. ft. facility is a €23m development and will have four fully equipped operating theatres, with 22 day case beds. This development will enable the Hospital to continue to develop our pioneering day case and short stay surgeries



and provide capacity in a protected elective unit. In addition to treating 6,000 patients per year the space will, in time dramatically reduce wait times for day case surgery and the requirement for recurrent NTPF funding support.

CRY on the Move

Due to increasing demands at the Centre for Cardiovascular Risk in Younger Persons (CRYP) which provides comprehensive evaluation and treatment of those diagnosed with, or at risk from heart disease, particularly at a young age, means the service users' have quickly outgrown the available capacity for its current location at the back of the Hospital. Late last year it was announced that the Centre will move to a new address (Unit B-14) at Tallaght Cross West – literally just across from the main gates of TUH.

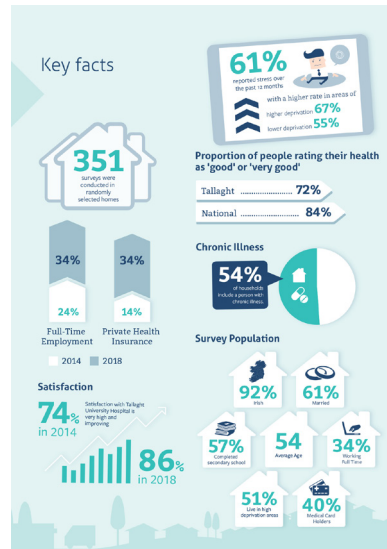
This is a €1.2m capital investment project which will see CRYP move into a purpose modern built outpatient facility that will be three times their current footprint (3,700 sq. feet). Construction has started with a tight six month timeline for works which will see the first clinic delivered in the new building in June 2019. The development is

unique as it is being funded collaboratively between the CRYP Foundation and the TUH Hospital Board. As a result of this capital partnership programme the HSE have also confirmed additional

revenue funding support that will see waiting lists reduce significantly with the full commissioning of the new facility – an innovative way of enhancing services by combining the ambitions of the Health Service, Hospital Board and Philanthropy.

Post-Recession Study of Tallaght Population

Prof Brendan Kelly launched a new report in November at the annual Meath Research Symposium. On a positive note the report found increased levels of public satisfaction with the services at TUH but a lack of mental health services is leading to increasing levels of stress and psychological ill health particularly in deprived areas. The report commissioned by the Meath Foundation can be read in full through this link. Commenting on the publication of the report Prof Kelly said, "it is evident that despite several years of economic recovery, its benefits have yet to be felt in deprived areas of Tallaght: The economic recovery has done little to improve mental health here and this is taking its toll on those in greatest need. For example – it impacts two thirds of the population living in the deprived communities of Tallaght where people have less education, don't own health insurance and are more likely to be living with



the burden of a person with a chronic illness or disability. There is a clear case for strengthening community and hospital mental health services and for other social care interventions to address the very real challenges these most vulnerable communities endure in their everyday lives."

Mindful Eating

Our daily schedule is busy, we eat on the run or skip meals. Every so often, we graze mindlessly on food even when we're not hungry.



'Mindful Eating' means being aware about what we are eating and why. This includes being conscious of how food is prepared and consumed, making informed food choices and honouring your hunger cues non-judgementally. It is about caring for yourself, enjoying your food and understanding its effect on the body. Mindful eating can be a tool to improve eating behaviours, enhance health, reduce stress levels and foster a healthful relationship with food. Eating mindfully is a simple life skill that can help you – slow down, relax and enjoy your meal with appreciation and satisfaction. It takes practice, but it doesn't require a lot of time to do.

Here are some useful tips to help you get started:

- ▶ Eat slowly. It takes time for the signal to reach the brain that you've had enough
- ▶ Chew slower. Allow yourself to explore and savour the texture and flavour
- ▶ Portion out the food before you eat it
- ▶ Check in with yourself during your meal – pause and ask yourself how hungry/satisfied you are
- ▶ Try to eat at a table. Avoid eating on the sofa or in front of your work desk
- ▶ Keep a food diary. Tracking what you eat may help you become mindful of what you eat.

A Shout out for Gout

Traditionally, gout is considered to be a disease of affluence; an affliction of wealthy, rather portly men of a certain age due unlimited access to bountiful rich foods and alcohol. The historical record is littered with august & portly individuals, Sir Issac Newton, Benjamin Franklin & King Henry VIII to name a few.

Gout is caused by an excess of circulating urate (hyperuricaemia) due to a combination of increased oral intake of dietary purines, or in older persons due to reduced excretion rates seen in chronic kidney disease. Classical gout attacks are characterised by the rapid onset of an extremely painful arthritis, most usually in the feet, where excess urate coalesces to form crystals within joints, leading to inflammation and a rapid inability to weight bear. In addition to its direct arthritis effect, hyperuricaemia has been associated with more rapid progression of chronic kidney disease leading to dialysis, increased rates of cardiovascular diseases including heart attack and stroke, and a higher incidence of Type 2 Diabetes.

In developed countries, the prevalence of gout has increased in line both with soaring obesity rates and rising life expectancies, with rates in excess of 10% in older males. While effective treatments exist if instituted early enough, long delays in diagnosis commonly lead to reduced treatment efficacy, disease progression and poor long-term outcomes. A paper published recently in the Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases, led by the Rheumatology Department at TUH has questioned the ability of existing internationally recognised classification criteria in the detection of gout at an early stage. In this study, patients with hyperuricaemia and chronic foot pain not meeting currently accepted classification criteria, were investigated both for the presence of gout crystals using joint ultrasound, and for a treatment response to gout medication. The study identified a high rate of occult crystal deposition within the joints of affected individuals and a subsequent dramatic improvement in patient self-reported pain levels following treatment. These results have challenged the established classification criteria for the disease, and suggest that changes to these criteria will enable effective early treatment, improved arthritis outcomes, and amelioration of other associated chronic diseases.

World First for Cardiac Cath Lab in TUH

In recent weeks our Cardiac Cath Lab became the first Cath Lab in the world to use a new wireless pacemaker programmer system. The Medtronic wireless programmer and pacemaker are currently being trialled and TUH are a pilot centre along with other healthcare facilities in Ireland and Europe.

The Cardiac Cath Lab treats on average 2,000 patients per year. Pacemakers have been implanted in patients for more than 50 years now, in this Hospital alone the lab would fit 250 per year. They are a safe and secure lifesaving device for patients with slow heart rates. As medical technology advances the team are seeing more innovation in the development of these devices and welcome the opportunity to be part of the pilot study. The benefits of a wireless pacemaker and programmer are reduced outpatient department visits for patients and fewer hospital admissions.



Pictured following the start of the pilot study were from left to right Donal O'Dea, Senior Cardiac Physiologist; Dr. David Moore, Consultant Cardiologist; Ellyn Morgan, Cardiac Cath Lab Nurse and Gintaras Michalauskas, Cardiac Physiologist.

Spring/Summer

In partnership with the Patient Community Advisory Council, the Hospital is working on a full schedule of health talks in the community for 2019.

The initiative started two years ago with just seven talks on various health topics taking place, last year the number grew to 14. This year the working number has grown to 16. The talks have proved extremely popular with the community with various centers offering to host the talks. The talks are given by a combination of Consultants, Advanced Nurse Practitioners, Health & Social Care Professionals from TUH. Full details will be available in early February on the [Hospital website](#) and regular posts on [Facebook](#). If you would like to receive details of the schedule of talks please send an email to gpconnect@tuh.ie

Diabetes Awards

To mark Diabetes Awareness Months the Diabetes team ran information mornings but they also arranged a very special ceremony recently. The presentation of awards to six patients for 320 years of lifelong living with Type 1 Diabetes. The special 50 and 60 years medals of achievement recognise their courage and perseverance in living with diabetes. TUH is a leading provider of complex diabetes care, and a core activity of its Diabetes Centre is to empower patients through education. Each year the Hospital sees and assists over 10,000 people living with diabetes.



Pictured from left to right at the Lifelong Living medal presentation were (front row) patient Sheila Devlin (60 years); Maire Stone (60 years); Florence Farrell (50 years) and Stephen Curran (50 years). Back row Karen Townsend, CNS OPD Diabetes TUH; Prof Richard Firth, Dr. James Gibney and Dr. Lucy-Ann Behan Consultant Endocrinologists at TUH.

IMPORTANT

Blood Tests for Children

We would like to remind all GP Practices that all blood tests at the Hospital are by appointment only, this includes children. When advising parents/guardians to bring the children to the Hospital for a blood test please advise that they must make an appointment via the SwiftQueue system online, they must also bring the relevant forms with them. Staff cannot facilitate walk-ins and cannot process booked appointments without the details of the blood tests you require for the patient.

If the blood tests a GP requires are urgent then the GP must contact the Phlebotomy Department before sending the patient in. Contact number for this Department is 01-414 3043 and is to be accessed by clinicians only.

Hours of opening are 8am-12.30pm and 1:30pm-4:30pm on Monday - Thursday

Friday 8am-12:15pm

Exercise in the Community Update



Since launching on May 1st 2018, MedEx (now called ExWell) there has been a tremendous response both from the referring clinicians and the patients. Over 400 referrals have been received, of which over 85% are from Tallaght University Hospital. Classes have tripled and more will be added to the timetable next month to accommodate the popularity. Referrals have been received from multiple departments within the Hospital including;

- ▶ Geriatric and stroke
- ▶ Oncology
- ▶ Psychiatry of Later Life
- ▶ Cardiology
- ▶ Physiotherapy
- ▶ Rheumatology
- ▶ Endocrinology

The average age of referred participants is 68.3 years with an age range of 27 to 89 years of age. The classes are one hour in duration, with medical support and trained instructors present at all times in Tallaght Leisure Centre on Tuesdays and Fridays at 11am, 12.30pm and 2pm.

Aerobic, strength, balance and flexibility exercises are performed throughout the class depending on each individual's ability. Tea and coffee are provided after each class to encourage social interaction. Before any participant can join the classes they must first complete an induction which includes a talk from our medical director and

light physical testing such as a walk test, height and weight and strength tests. Inductions run every month to accommodate a quick turnaround for participants from referral to starting the classes.

A brief referral letter is needed to refer a patient, include a brief note with the patient name, DOB, patient contact details including a phone number, primary diagnosis, comorbidities, medication and any specific comments, concerns or suggestions you wish to include. The referral letter should be sent to Dr. Noel McCaffrey, ExWell, Tallaght Leisure Centre, Fortunestown Way, Whitestown, Dublin 24. You can click here to see a brief video and the impact it is having.

Quotes from participants:

"ExWell is fantastic. I wish I had known about it when I retired 10 years ago!!"

"Really enjoy the class, helps with my mental health"

"I always feel much better after the hour"

"ExWell is a brilliant motivation. It allows attendees to meet great people and to improve flexibility and movement"

Date	Course Details	Booking Information
27.02.2019	Dementia Care in Primary Care Target Audience: All healthcare professionals working in primary care. Time: 8.30am – 12.30pm Venue: Kippure Room, The Centre for Learning & Development, Tallaght University Hospital Cost: N/A	www.hseland.ie (select TUH Catalogue to enrol on programme) or email: Learningstation@tuh.ie
06.02.19 & 27.02.19	Dementia Care – Enhancing & Enabling Well-Being for the Person with Dementia Target Audience: This two day programme is appropriate for anyone working in the health service. Time: 8:30am-4pm Venue: The Robert Graves Post Graduate Centre, Centre for Learning & Development, Tallaght University Hospital Cost: N/A	www.hseland.ie (select TUH Catalogue to enrol on programme) or email: Learningstation@tuh.ie
10.02.2019 12.03.2019 26.03.2019 09.04.2019 14.05.2019	Venepuncture & Peripheral Venous Access Device (PVAD) Insertion Time: 10:30am-12:30pm Venue: Two Rock Clinical Skills Lab - CLD Cost: €50 fee (HSELand eLearning programme to be completed prior to attending)	www.hseland.ie (select TUH Catalogue to enrol on programme) or email: Learningstation@tuh.ie Enquiries to: Clodagh.McCloughlin@tuh.ie
Every Friday during Term Time	Grand Rounds Time: 8am – 9am Venue: Trinity Lecture Theatre, CLD Walk in – no booking required <i>Weekly speaker & subject matter updates on Twitter – @CLDTallUniHosp</i>	Enquiries to: Sandra.Daly@tuh.ie Tel: 01 414 2883



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@tuh.ie