

UltraNews

eNewsletter of Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate



Navigate stories

Welcome to our Autumn 2022 edition of **UltraNews**

Research Team of the Year 2022 awarded to Pregnancy Loss Research Group

The First Lady of New Jersey visits CUMH

MaternityONESouth Update

New femtech Ecosystem Planned for State

UHK Maternity Services win Team of the Year

The Importance of Exercise for Peri-menopausal and Menopausal Women

Other news



**INTERNATIONAL DAY
OF THE MIDWIFE 2022**

Read more inside



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

I am pleased to introduce the Autumn 2022 edition of UltraNews, the staff newsletter of Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate.

As we bid farewell to the Summer season, I hope you all had the opportunity over the Summer to take a break and recharge your batteries.

Ireland South Women and Infants Directorate is now in its fifth year of operation. The formation of our Directorate has changed how we relate to each other and has built a collaborative partnership across the four hospitals to provide the best possible care to all of the women, infants and families we serve.

Collaboration is one of our core values and is the key to our success. There are concerns about recent reports that propose the break-up of our Directorate. It is

unconscionable to all of us that it should be broken up when it has shown such benefits to women and their babies across the southern region. Together, we have faced incredibly challenging times, none more so than the COVID-19 pandemic, which remains with us almost 3 years on. Whilst the pandemic brought with it many challenges, it has also highlighted the many strengths within our Directorate. Our most proud achievement, over the past 5 years, is our No Refusals Policy, the first of its kind in the country, ensuring the safe movement of babies and patients in need of critical care.

Over the last five years, you have risen to the challenge time and time again in extraordinary circumstances to deliver safe services to our patients. However, our work environment profoundly shapes our wellbeing.

All of our staff across the Directorate are exposed to multiple factors within their work, which may impact their physical, mental and emotional well-being in negative ways. At Ireland South Women and Infants Directorate, we have a great responsibility and a significant opportunity to make a positive contribution to our employees' health. I am delighted to announce that we have recently appointed a Psychologist for Staff Support & Wellbeing, Dr Coleen Cormack, Senior Clinical Psychologist, to guide us in addressing these challenges and empowering our workforce going forward. Coleen is here to support all staff from each unit within Ireland South.

You will notice that we have added a Wellbeing section to this edition of UltraNews, sharing expert diet and lifestyle advice from our colleagues. We have incredible knowledge and resources within our Directorate that our patients benefit from every day. It is also important that we share our knowledge for the welfare of our friends and colleagues.

On May 5th, we celebrated International Day of the Midwife. This year celebrates the 100th anniversary of the International Confederation of Midwives and 100 years of progress.

It is a wonderful opportunity to thank our midwives and student midwives for their work, supporting women and bringing new life into the world each and every day.

I often use the quote, '*Ní neart go cur le chéile*'- There is no strength without unity. Thank you for your unrelenting commitment to the women, infants and families we serve in Cork, Kerry, South Tipperary and Waterford. It remains an ongoing privilege to work alongside you.

John R. Higgins

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



UHK opens a new Home from Home room offering choice to women in region

By Janice McHugh

Maternity services staff in University Hospital Kerry (UHK) were delighted to celebrate the official opening of the **Home Away from Home** room on the 3rd of June 2022 attended by Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly and Minister for Education, Norma Foley.

provides choice to the women who use our service. This is one of several exciting projects in the pipeline, aligning with the National Maternity Strategy, that will ensure women availing of the services in UHK have access to better and more timely care with tailored services across all age groups.”

The new birthing room, named Saolú, features a Hydrotherapy pool providing a calm and relaxing environment in a low technology setting for women in the first stage of labour. The name was chosen by Eimear Galvin (pictured with her baby Ailbhe) a service user and Community Midwife. Saolú means “Childbirth” in Irish.

This modern space provides an environment that moves away from the clinical setting, whilst still providing a safe environment for normal risk women to birth their babies.

Sandra O’Connor, Director of Midwifery, UHK, thanked all the key stakeholders instrumental in bringing this service to fruition. “It is a wonderful milestone which



Research Team of the Year 2022 awarded to Pregnancy Loss Research Group

Congratulations to the Pregnancy Loss Research Group at University College Cork and Cork University Maternity Hospital led by Professor Keelin O’Donoghue who were awarded Best Research Team of the Year at the UCC Research awards in June.

The Pregnancy Loss Research Group (PLRG) leads national research and the development of resources and evidence-based advice and interventions to prevent pregnancy loss and improve health care, health and social outcomes for women, babies and their families. Its research focuses on all types of pregnancy and infant loss, including first and second-trimester miscarriage,

ectopic and molar pregnancy, stillbirth, termination of pregnancy, neonatal death and pregnancy after loss. The Group is co-located within Cork University Maternity Hospital, the INFANT Research Centre and the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, University College Cork. Research activities are funded by a range of organisations, including the Health Research Board, Irish Research Council and Science Foundation Ireland. Partnerships/ collaborations are integral to the PLRG’s work and include national and international academic institutions, public bodies/agencies, and non-governmental/support organisations.

Professor Keelin O’Donoghue says of the award;

“The PLRG was established in 2012 at CUMH and it is wonderful for all the team to receive this acknowledgment from UCC on our 10th anniversary. I am very grateful to all team members, previous and current, as well as funders and, of course, all those who engage with and support our work.”



CELEBRATING TWO YEARS OF SMOKE FREE START

Smoke Free Start is celebrating two years of service in CUMH. The initiative started as a pilot project in August 2020, and, following evaluation of its success by the Tobacco Free Ireland programme, was made a permanent service in August 2021. It is one of only two midwifery-led, onsite, opt-out stop smoking services in Ireland. In the last 2 years the service has reached many milestones, the most significant being the referral of over 1,000 women for support to quit smoking during pregnancy.

Smoking in pregnancy is associated with increased maternal and infant mortality and morbidity. Women who smoke past their positive pregnancy test find it challenging to stop smoking. Connecting with support services increases the success of their quit attempt. There have been over 200 smoke free babies born with the support of the service, with many more expected in the next few months.

Pregnant women who smoke also find it challenging to disclose their smoking status. They need to receive support at every contact with healthcare professionals. Smoke Free Start introduced the Making Every Contact Count programme to CUMH with multidisciplinary staff completing both the online programme and the face-to-face training. CUMH is now at the forefront of implementing this mandatory training for all healthcare staff.

In recognition of the achievements of the service, a successful Sláintecare project, Smoke Free Start was acknowledged at the TFI 'Endgame; Leave No-one Behind



conference' which took place on World No Tobacco Day at the Aviva Stadium on the 31st of May. In January 2022, CUMH also participated as an expert practitioner at the International SHINE conference for smoke-free homes and the follow-up workshop to represent a marginalised group whose voice is seldom heard.

The service is again leading the way in the Irish maternity services since the recent introduction of Breath Carbon Monoxide testing for all pregnant women at booking. This gold standard of care for pregnant women helps to incentivise women to stop smoking and identifies those who are exposed to harmful second-hand smoke.

After a hugely successful (and eventful) 2 years at Ireland South Women and Infants Directorate, we are looking forward to the birth of more smoke-free babies.

Majella Phelan, A/CMM2 Smoking Cessation, CUMH



Smoking during pregnancy is the leading cause of adverse pregnancy outcomes



The First Lady of New Jersey visits CUMH

On April 26th, we were delighted to welcome the First Lady of New Jersey, Tammy Snyder Murphy, to CUMH to meet with members of the Neonatal team and Infant Centre. First Lady Mrs Murphy and New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy led a trade delegation to Ireland in April to explore the potential for strengthening business ties between New Jersey and the Cork region.

With a shared commitment to women, babies and families, Mrs Murphy was keen to visit CUMH to discuss areas of research and potential collaboration between Nurture NJ, CUMH and Infant Centre.

An advocate for maternal and infant health, Mrs Murphy launched Nurture New Jersey in early 2019 as a state-wide initiative committed to ensuring equity in maternal and infant health outcomes for black and brown women, and reducing overall maternal and infant mortality and morbidity in the state.

On the day, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between New Jersey Economic Development Authority and University College Cork which will provide a general framework for future collaboration between Nurture NJ and INFANT.



Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly visits The Lee Clinic, Cork

On Friday, May 27th we welcomed Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly to our new women's health clinic at The Lee Clinic, Cork. The Minister took a tour of the facility which is the location for urogynaecology and fertility clinics serving patients within the Ireland South region.

With women's health being a top priority for the government, The Minister was delighted to hear how The Lee Clinic will facilitate the improvement of existing services and the development of new services in support of women's healthcare in Ireland South.

The enhancement of maternity, gynaecology and neonatology services for

patients over the last 5 years has materially increased the space needed at CUMH for these services, in particular outpatient services. The visit was an opportunity for Professor John R. Higgins to reiterate the growing need for a new Ireland South Women's Health Centre. He discussed with the Minister how the development of this facility is crucial to seeing the kind of patient throughput that is necessary to meet national and international targets for outpatient and inpatient management and represents a modern and highly efficient approach to the provision of maternity, neonatology and gynaecology services to the women and infants in Ireland South.



Pictured above: Ms Orfhlaith O'Sullivan welcomes Minister Donnelly to the newly opened Urogynaecology Department in The Lee Clinic, Cork.



The European Organisation for Treatment of Trophoblastic Diseases gathers in Cork to celebrate its 10th annual conference

On May 13th and 14th, The European Organisation for Treatment of Trophoblastic Diseases (EOTTD) met for their 10th annual event at University College Cork. The event had been scheduled to take place in Warsaw but moved to Cork due to war in Ukraine. Despite the short notice, Dr John Coulter, Clinical Lead, and his team hosted a fantastic 2-day gathering attended by 120 clinicians and researchers working in the field of GTD, Gestational trophoblastic disease, in Europe.

The European Organisation for Treatment of Trophoblastic Diseases (EOTTD) is dedicated to optimising diagnosis, treatment, follow-up and research. Following 2 days of brainstorming sessions, presentations and lectures, the group aim:

To formulate **guidelines** for the diagnosis of GTD, particularly criteria for the diagnosis of early molar pregnancies by:

- Providing a workflow for diagnosis of molar pregnancies / GTT indicating where ancillary techniques would be useful
- Outlining pathological criteria for diagnosis

of molar pregnancies with reference to relevant publications

- Outlining pathological criteria for diagnosis of trophoblastic tumours with reference to relevant publications
- Outlining each of the recommended ancillary techniques with reference to relevant publications.

To encourage **centralised management** by:

- Ensuring as many pathologists as possible are aware of the EOTTD and recruiting one or more representatives, from each of the different countries/regions in the EOTTD to the Pathology and Genetics Working Group.
- Providing a list of representatives for the different counties/regions in the EOTTD who might be able to offer advice on challenging cases.

To facilitate **research** by:

- Collaborating on the review of rare and unusual cases
- Incorporating a research/case review day at the next EOTTD meeting.



Pictured above: Midwives at TippUH celebrate IDM2022.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE MIDWIFE 2022

“Being a midwife and realising that you are now part of a family’s history forever is incredible. Supporting women when they need it most is the empowering for me,” says Maggie Dowling, Assistant Director of Midwifery at TippUH. On the 5th of May each year, The International Day of the Midwife is celebrated to highlight the important role midwives play in the health of mothers, children and their families. Internationally, this year’s theme is 100 Years of Progress.

As well as acknowledging and celebrating the work of midwives, International Day of the Midwife is also a day to

encourage people to consider midwifery as a future career. “The greatest privilege is to enable this extraordinarily influential part of life, and to constantly love what I do,” says Katie Bourke, Director of Midwifery at Cork University Maternity Hospital.

Across Ireland South, staff came together to acknowledge the compassion, commitment and professionalism shown by our wonderful midwives.



Each unit marked the occasion with celebratory refreshments and held a raffle for a €100 One4All Voucher.

We thank every midwife working across the Directorate for your ongoing commitment to high quality midwifery care and the dedication, and the skill and compassionate care you provide to women and their families of Ireland South.



Pictured above: Midwives across Ireland South Women and Infants Directorate share their #MidwifeMemories.

MIDWIFE MEMORIES

By Paula Curtin, Director of Midwifery, UHW

International Day of the Midwife on 5 May, celebrates the 100th anniversary of the International Confederation of Midwives and 100 years of progress.

Paula Curtin, Director of Midwifery at University Hospital Waterford, reflects on some of the most significant changes she has witnessed throughout her career to date, “The maternity landscape has changed significantly over the last 20 years. The National Maternity Strategy 2016-2026 ensures all pregnant women have fair and informed choices with access to the right level of care and support that is most appropriate to their needs.” Paula notes that the changing landscape in maternity care is in line with political change within Ireland, including Divorce, Same-Sex marriage and the Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Act 2018.

“The rise of social media use has also hugely influenced women’s decision-making in pregnancy and birth over the last decade. It provides opportunities for women to seek out information and support as and when it is wanted and needed. However, these platforms have positives and negatives. We advise that all women have access to high-quality, researched information from a trusted source.”

The COVID-19 pandemic brought drastic changes and challenges for maternity care and staff. Care for pregnant, birthing, and breastfeeding women cannot be interrupted, even during a pandemic crisis that requires social distancing. What did change was that some women re-considered their birth options and questioned the need for hospital births and appointments. Keeping birth options open was a priority for University Hospital Waterford which aims to share information and promote ever-greater care.



Paula says, “At UHW, there is a definite shift towards home birth. It has moved from a niche service to a more mainstream choice. We have provided this service since 2000, along with a DOMINO (Domiciliary in/out) service. These services offer a more flexible approach to appointment times and follow-up in the home post-delivery, making life easier for women and their families.

The pandemic forced us to adjust the service we provide rapidly. However, adapting our education and support services, such as breastfeeding support, to online delivery has facilitated choices for women and their families. We intend to continue taking a fresh approach to meet women’s needs.”



Above: The future of our maternity services making new memories: Kayleigh, a 4th year undergraduate student from UL on placement in Maternity OPD in UHW.

Top image: Families at UHW express their gratitude to the midwives for the care and support they received throughout their pregnancy and birth.



Meet Maggie Dowling, TippUH’s New Assistant Director of Midwifery

I have worked in TippUH since November 2004. I became a CMM2 shift leader in 2016 and CMM3 in 2021. I was recently successful in being appointed Assistant Director of Midwifery. Currently I represent Maternity on many hospital governance groups.

I am looking forward to working closely with Glenda O’Gorman, who was recently appointed as

Interim Business Manager here in TippUH. The unit is a hub of activity with a very close-knit team. I’m delighted to congratulate Sinead Bracken who has just taken up the role of CNM2 Shift Leader on the Labour Ward. Sinead is taking over from Eileen Mulcahy who retired in June after nearly 20 years. Catherine Quirke has also just taken on the role of CNM2 in our Special Care Baby Unit and Karina Nugent is Acting CNM2 in the postnatal/ antenatal unit.

It’s very busy in TippUH but we have a wonderful team here and lots of exciting stuff in the pipeline.

I work 5 days per week so having hobbies is essential for my physical and mental health! I have three grown up children who I enjoy spending quality time with. I am a new gym user and I find it really helps after work to de-stress. I love the outdoors also and really enjoy gardening.

Baby Ava Lauren Carr is first baby born on International Day of the Midwife in CUMH

Congratulations to Maria Dorgan, whose daughter Ava Lauren Carr was the first baby born on International Day of the Midwife 2022 in CUMH. Ava was born at 8.14 am on May 5th, 2022 under the expert care of student midwife, Christina Brackett. Maria and husband David couldn’t have wished for a better experience for the birth of their second daughter. “Christina and the other Midwives who cared for us were fantastic from start to finish. They were always a step ahead, guiding us calmly throughout. We have had such a lovely, positive experience in CUMH.” says Maria.

Since arriving home, Ava has received plenty of love and care from Mum, Dad and big sister Sarah.



Pictured right: Maria and baby Ava with their certificate given to babies born on International Day of the Midwife.

Cathy O'Sullivan retires as Director of the Centre of Midwifery Education at Cork University Maternity Hospital

“We put women at the heart of everything we do, and while the ways and settings in which midwives work have changed and evolved, what has remained constant is our commitment, care, and dedication to the women and babies we support,” says Cathy O'Sullivan, who recently retired as Director of the Centre of Midwifery Education at Cork University Maternity Hospital.

Cathy's career in midwifery began 40 years ago, in 1982 when she completed her midwifery education and training in Cork's Erinville hospital. “After I qualified, I went to Thailand to work as a nurse/midwife in Cambodian and Vietnamese refugee camps with Concern. I set up a midwifery training programme for the women working in the health centre with me. That was where my love of teaching started. I had an interpreter translate for me, and I used lots of picture aids and practical teaching to ensure that the students learnt as much as possible.”

After returning to Ireland in 1984, Cathy resumed her role as a nurse/midwife at The Erinville Hospital before focusing on education. “I completed a Bachelor of Nursing Studies at UCD in 1993, which enabled me to register as a nurse/midwife tutor with An Bord Altranais (now known as NMBI), and a master's degree in midwifery education in UCC in 2004.” Cathy's own education allowed her to have a dynamic career in midwifery, progressing to Director of the Centre of Midwifery Education at CUMH before her recent retirement.

“The years I spent teaching were the happiest and most fulfilling years of my life. My motto was 'love your students or lose them' - they

are the future of the service and need to be nurtured and appreciated. The role of education is to give students roots to ground them and wings to fly and provide the highest quality care to the women, babies and families that they care for,” says Cathy.

Cathy has recently published *Through Your Doors Again* which she wrote to document her recent breast cancer journey through the various stages of her treatment, both the good and the challenging. All proceeds go to Cork ARC House, who have provided wonderful support to Cathy during and after her treatment. *Through Your Doors Again* is available on the Cork ARC website and online at Amazon and Book Depository.

Cathy intends to enjoy her retirement and carry on writing. “I have just finished a short story writing course with the Irish Writers' Centre. I will enter the short story that I wrote into a few competitions and I will submit to journals for publication. I will continue poetry writing also. I will take time to relax and enjoy life.”



Pictured above: ADOM Una Cahill presents Cathy with flowers at her retirement party.



PROMPT 3 TRAINING RETURNS TO CUMH

Dr Oonagh Hickey, Consultant Anaesthesiologist, CUH



Pictured above: Professor John R. Higgins welcomes staff to PROMPT courses at CUMH.

We are excited to announce the recent return of the PRactical Obstetric Multi-Professional Training Course (PROMPT) to the Cork University Maternity Hospital (CUMH).

The maternity setting is a very dynamic environment, and poor outcomes for mothers and babies are catastrophic for their families. The PRactical Obstetric Multi-Professional Training Course (PROMPT) originated at Southmead Hospital in Bristol, following a 2006 review of their local obstetric emergency training. Their findings were that team training improved knowledge and teamwork and resulted in a 50% reduction in neonatal hypoxic brain injuries, a 70% reduction in injuries following shoulder dystocia, and improvements in the management of Category 1 emergency sections. By 2008, the PROMPT course had been formally developed to facilitate the

rollout of such team training to other regions. It has been updated over time to include anaesthetic emergencies and to incorporate findings from the Confidential Enquiries into Maternal and Child Health (CEMACH) reports.

We were already running in-house multi-disciplinary obstetric emergency workshops at the CUMH at this time and there was an enthusiastic uptake of the PROMPT course, with members of the midwifery, obstetric and anaesthesiology teams attending Train the Trainer Courses in the UK. The PROMPT course consists of morning lectures on teamwork and clinical topics such as CTG interpretation, pre-eclampsia and maternal collapse. In the afternoon, multi-disciplinary teams rotate through various workshops, including shoulder dystocia, sepsis, and anaesthetic emergencies.

The PROMPT courses held in the CUMH have been a huge success, with great attendance from staff members of the CUMH and other hospitals throughout the region. As a member of the faculty, I found that the PROMPT courses provided a unique opportunity for staff of all grades from midwifery, obstetrics, and anaesthesiology to meet in a non-clinical environment for the common purpose of improving teamwork and patient care. The courses allow for a deeper understanding of each other's roles and of the challenges faced by colleagues. They also provided a safe place for people to ask "silly questions" as well as facilitating the strengthening of social bonds over coffee.

Unfortunately, training was curtailed during the pandemic due to the increasing demands placed on clinical staff and also due to the need for social distancing. However, we are delighted that the program is up and running again under the new leadership of Ms Mary O'Connor, Interim Director of Midwifery Education, CUMH. On Friday the 13th of May, the first

CUMH PROMPT course in three years was held. The morning lectures were delivered online, but the afternoon workshops were conducted in person.

Dr Murray Connolly, Anaesthesiology Fellow, and Dr Eoin O'Rathallaigh, SpR, took on the roles of Lead Anaesthesiology Faculty and facilitated the smooth running of the course. Both Murray and Eoin updated and delivered lectures, including "Maternal Collapse", "Anaesthetic Emergencies" and "Maternal Sepsis". These talks were recorded and will be available for use in future PROMPT courses. Eoin and Ms Mary O'Connor facilitated the "Anaesthetic Emergencies" workshop, at which participants had an opportunity to manage a deteriorating patient and to practise using the trainer AED.

The hope is that more regular PROMPT courses can be provided in the future, further promoting good teamwork, early recognition and treatment of emergencies involving the obstetric patient, and hopefully improving outcomes for the mothers and babies of the region.



Pictured above: The multidisciplinary team attending the Anaesthetic Emergencies workshop.



MaternityONESouth Update

By Kate Lyons, Project Manager

Pictured above: Staff from CUMH at recent NRP, STABLE and Newborn Developmental Care Training.

When HIQA visited all 19 maternity hospitals in Ireland in 2019, they wanted to know where and how staff access their policies, procedures, protocols and guidelines and the levels of staff compliance with obstetric and neonatal emergency training (amongst other things). The MaternityONESouth committee has been working to address these issues for all staff working in the Ireland South Women and Infants Directorate (ISWID). We now have a central repository for maternity, obstetric, gynaecology and neonatal policies, procedures, protocols and guidelines (PPPGs) using a new ISWID Q-Pulse/ Knowledge Portal. Work is also ongoing to update our Obstetric and Neonatal Emergency PPPGs. Finally, we are also developing a training strategy for our staff in obstetric and neonatal emergencies (PROMPT, BLS, NRP & K2).

We are developing a plan where all staff have protected time to attend obstetric and neonatal emergency training, and we are exploring the cost implications of doing this. Obstetric and neonatal emergencies are uncommon; however, it is essential that the workforce is trained and prepared to deal with these situations when they arise. We would like to ensure staff receive the opportunity to access training to minimise risk to mothers, babies and staff and enable them to deliver a safe quality service within our maternity units.

Education and training will provide safer care by breaking down barriers and creating safe learning environments where all staff can learn from previous errors by putting the women and babies at the centre of our care. All staff training will be facilitated, for example, through rostering and they will be encouraged to attend education and training appropriate to their roles, using a dedicated education and training budget.

“Protected education and training time is allocated as appropriate to the learning and development needs of staff,” *National Standards for Safer Better Maternity Services (HIQA 2018)*

I will be visiting UHK, UHW and TippUH in the coming weeks. I am looking forward to meeting some of you.



Professor Gene Dempsey raises vital funds for CUMH Neonatal Sanctum Appeal



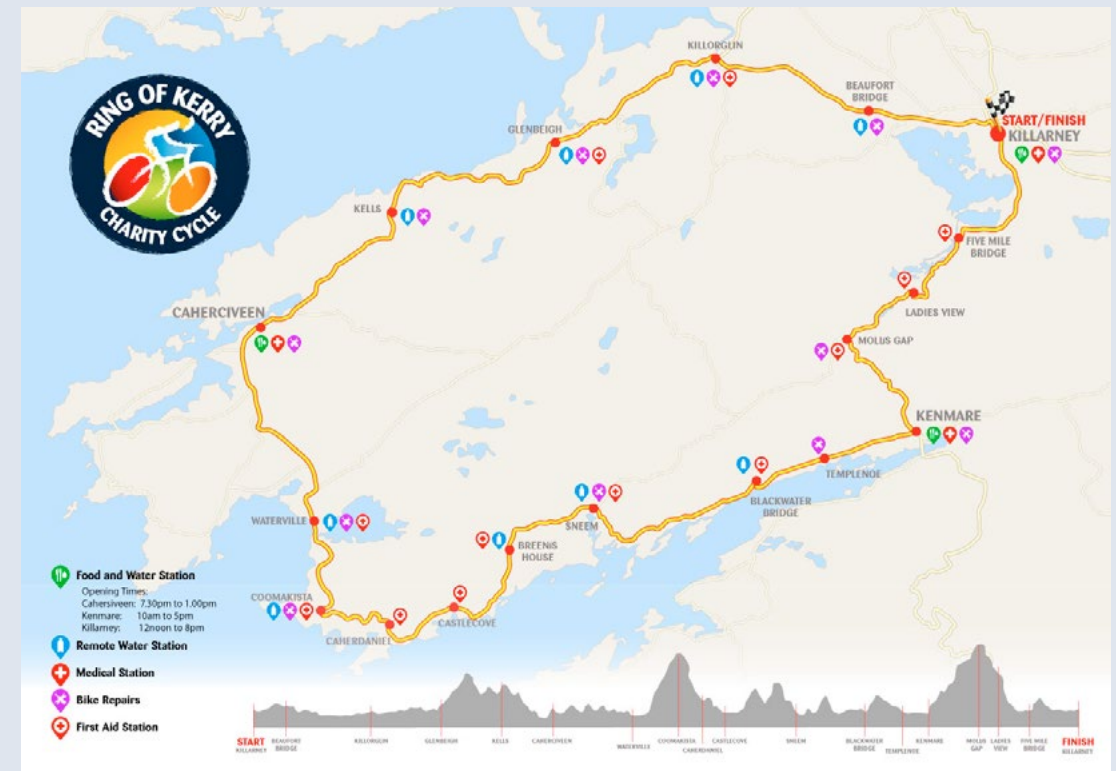
On Saturday, July 2nd, Professor Gene Dempsey cycled the Ring of Kerry to raise funds for CUH Charity. Reaching well over his target of €5000, all donations go directly to the Neonatal Sanctum Appeal at CUMH.

The Neonatal Sanctum will be a structure in the CUMH garden for parents to take a baby in palliative care or for a seriously ill mother to access. It will comprise two key areas; a Neonatal Sanctum and a Parent’s Room located nearby.

The Parent’s Room will be a private area, separate from the unit but still nearby. This is where parents can take some time out from the clinical setting during a stressful time, make a cup of tea in a comfortable environment and have some privacy.

Stepping outside in a quiet, dignified space, away from a clinical-critical environment, is so important for families. Sharing a small glimpse of nature with an ill or dying baby and seeing the blue sky in a place of quiet, solace and privacy creates cherished memories that will last for many years.

Thank you to Gene and congratulations to all our colleagues who took part in the 2022 Ring of Kerry Charity Cycle.



Innovation Programme Update

By Caitriona Heffernan, Innovation Programme Lead, Cork University Maternity Hospital



I'm delighted to update you on another busy quarter in the Innovation Office. The innovation portfolio is growing all the time with new opportunities emerging alongside the delivery of existing projects. It's fantastic to see new pockets of innovation activity beginning to spring up around the Directorate and as always, the Innovation Office is keen to support any staff member or team developing a new innovation or a new way of working across our four hospitals.

Designers in Residence:

We are looking forward to welcoming Ms. Asia Cheung and Mr. Gareth Byrne to Ireland South Women and Infant's Directorate in early September for a four-week period. A Service & Interaction Designer and Product Designer, Asia and Gareth will spend time at CUMH working on how we might design the digital experience of our patients and families and map patient journeys to identify service and patient pain points. Both Designers are graduates of the National College of Art and Design and have completed Healthcare related design projects during their studies. Their time at Ireland South forms part of an exciting new initiative sponsored by the HSE Spark Innovation Programme to provide healthcare settings with access to design expertise and to further demonstrate to high value of Design in addressing the complex problems of healthcare. If you'd like to know more about the role of Design in healthcare service development and delivery, or if you have a project that might benefit from Design input, please contact the innovation office.

Update on the Ireland South WID Innovation Awards:

The recipients of the seed funding awards from the Innovation Awards competition held earlier this year have been busy planning the next steps for their innovation projects.

Asia Cheung
Design Intern
Service & Interaction Design Graduate, NCAD

"Bringing design into the healthcare world can improve efficiency and effectiveness by increasing our focus on patient and provider needs. Design thinking lets us engage with our users and environment to see what can be improved by designing multiple interactions to achieve a successful user flow for all."

Gareth Byrne
Design Intern
Product Design Graduate, NCAD

"I believe, as a designer, that I have a role in improving the standard of living in our communities. For me, design is not just about how something looks or feels, but how it works and can be implemented."

There has been a particularly exciting development for one of the winning groups who are using the seed money awarded to them in the competition to progress their novel product to prototyping stage. The funding will allow them to engage the expertise of a developer who specialises in the design and build of medical-grade digital health solutions in order to test the function and verify the impact of their product.

Ireland South Collaboration with the FemTech Hub at HIHI:

We are delighted to be partnering with Health Innovation Hub Ireland to deliver this unique initiative focusing specifically on women's health. Speaking at a recent webinar outlining the establishment of the FemTech Hub at HIHI, Director Dr Tanya Mulcahy and co-founder of 'Identifyher' Heidi Davis explained that "Femtech is all about listening to women and their health problems, to see if there are areas that have not been addressed, to identify women's problems/needs and help to convert possible solutions and develop technology. Historically there has been a lack of investment and development in female focused health products, with a lack of understanding of women's needs" This is a very exciting development and a wonderful opportunity for the clinicians at Ireland South WID to continue not only to deliver excellence to their patients of today but also to contribute to the development of services and technologies for the women of tomorrow. You can find more detail about this collaboration later in this edition of UltraNews.

The final furlong for our Healthcare Innovation scholars:

We wish the very best of luck to our Post Graduate Diploma in Healthcare

Innovation students from CUMH and UHK as they approach the end of their period of study. Orla McCarty (Women's Health Physio at CUMH), Susan Vaughan (Neonatal Nurse at CUMH) and Mairin McElligott (Project Lead for Maternity Services, UHK) are currently developing their strategic implementation plans for the innovation projects they have developed over the past number of months. Throughout the course, the three women have developed frameworks to validate high potential healthcare innovation projects and have translated innovation concepts into live projects. Though the academic process does not demand that students implement their focus project, all three of the delegates from Ireland South are actively pursuing the implementation of their chosen project area. The project areas relate to predicting maternal perinatal injury, supporting mothers separated from their infant due to hospital transfer through technology and enhancing the utility of ISBAR in the Electronic Health Record. We are already exploring ways in which these projects can be further enhanced for impact through the use of Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and Mixed Reality technology. We look forward to benefiting from the innovations brought about by these change makers at Ireland South.

Collaborations with our Academic Network:

I strongly believe that innovation happens at the intersections of knowledge, expertise and opportunity. I also believe that the more diverse the experience and points of view of those pursuing a solution the richer the outcomes are. In this spirit, we were delighted to partner with Munster Technological University in May of this year to provide a healthcare challenge to a group of students

undertaking the Design Thinking for Innovation Digital badge at the Cork campus. The 'problem space' put forward by Ireland South WID related to the lifestyle and behaviour changes that need to be undertaken by women who have been diagnosed with Gestational Diabetes to ensure a safe and healthy pregnancy. This broad problem space was defined by the different groups using Design Thinking Methodology and the solutions proposed were extremely interesting, tackling the issue from a number of different perspectives. The experience provided a glimpse of the potential value in looking outside our own industry and practice for new insights and fresh perspectives on addressing healthcare challenges and tackling 'wicked problems'. Fred Creedon, Programme Director at MTU, has kindly put together a short video outlining the outputs from the course if you are interested in finding out more (scan QR code).

Innovation Clinic Series:

The Innovation Clinic series will launch in early September as a support for individuals and teams who would like to discuss any idea for an innovation or improvement that would benefit staff or patients. The clinics will provide an ideal opportunity for those who plan on submitting an idea to the Healthcare Challenge Open Call running in October (see advert attached) to seek feedback on their idea or access mentorship around validating or developing their idea. The clinic is open to all staff from across the Directorate and there is no requirement around how well developed your idea needs to be before booking your slot at the clinic. Live clinic slots (held at CUMH) can be booked on 8th September, 15th September and 29th September between 12pm and 2pm and virtual (Zoom) clinic slots can be booked at other times. Please note that evening slots can be made available to facilitate night staff. Please email caitrona.heffernan@hse.ie to book your slot.



SAVE THE DATE! INNOVATION CHALLENGE OCTOBER 2022

- Pitch your idea for an improvement or innovation and win seed funding to progress that idea to the next stage.
- Watch out for upcoming webinars & design thinking workshops (dates to be announced via staff email)
- Book your slot at an upcoming "Innovation ideas clinic" to help define or refine your idea.

Seed funding pot of €10,000 available for winning projects

For further information, please contact caitrona.heffernan@hse.ie



Article originally featured in *The Irish Times*, 02 June 2022

A new initiative aimed at stimulating the development of products, services and start-ups among femtech founders is being backed by the Health Innovation Hub Ireland, which is based in University College Cork.

The State-backed organisation is trying to stimulate the creation of an ecosystem of experts and entrepreneurs, leading to more women founders in Ireland and attracting more investors here.

The initiative will provide access to clinical, research and business expertise, through the Ireland South Women and Infants Directorate for clinical expertise, and UCC Innovation for research expertise. A team of advisers will be on hand to provide business and enterprise support.

"In the last couple of years, we have noticed quite a few companies coming in with technologies that address women's health," said Dr Tanya Mulcahy, director of Health Innovation Hub Ireland.

"We can provide a lot of support, but there is a whole change worldwide in the femtech space. Women are now starting their own companies, which is brilliant to see. When

you combine identifying healthcare needs with women wanting to start their own companies, there's a whole explosion of femtech worldwide."

The organisation is calling on people to join the femtech network, with an official gathering planned for September.

"We want to bring the right groups of people together: people interested in starting their own companies, women who have problems they want to see addressed, and then people who are interested in creating companies, supporting companies, and funding companies," said Dr Mulcahy.

"Get a few people together in a room and the next thing is you have a problem and a solution that works, but they really need the clinical and business input. That's where we are going to come from."

Femtech is predicted to take off globally, with a Frost & Sullivan report foreseeing global venture capital funding and investments will grow to \$9 billion (€8.3 billion) by 2024, up from \$1.69 billion (€1.57 billion) in 2019. By 2025, the market globally is expected to exceed \$275 billion (€256 billion).

The Femtech Revolution and Opportunities for Women's Health

BY DR TANYA MULCAHY, DIRECTOR HEALTH INNOVATION HUB IRELAND

The Women's Health Task Force (WHTF) organised a webinar on Thursday 14th July, presented by Health Innovation Hub Ireland (HIHI). HIHI is a national initiative supported by the Department of Health, the HSE, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and Enterprise Ireland.

The word **Femtech** was first used in 2016 by founder Ida Tin who developed the first digital period tracking app called Clue. Femtech is a term that refers to diagnostic tools, products, services, wearables and software that use technology to address women's health issues. It focuses on women's health, of all ages.

The title of the webinar was "The Femtech Revolution and Opportunities for Women's Health". Dr Tanya Mulcahy (Director of HIHI) presented with her colleague Heidi Davis (Co-founder of Identityher).

Femtech is all about listening to women and their health problems to see if there are areas that have not been addressed, identifying women's problems/needs and, helping to convert possible solutions and developing technology. Historically there has been a lack of

investment and development in female-focused health products, with a lack of understanding of women's needs.

But all is changing!

Nearly half the world's population are women, a huge unserved market. Women drive 70%-80% of all household consumer purchases. Women are also the primary decision-makers when it comes to health care for themselves and their families.

Today, in relation to industry and investment globally, there is a massive focus on investment. Venture Capital investment may go from \$1.69M in 2019 to \$9B by 2024. By 2025 the investment is expected to exceed \$275B.

“Technology can change how women feel and see themselves in the world. It can enable women to listen to their bodies and begin to understand what they are experiencing and why. If we could achieve something that simple, the world would look very different... femtech could provide the technological liberation that the political one hasn't been able to deliver.”



Ida Tin
Founder, Clue



Pictured above: Members of the Specialist Perinatal Mental Health team at CUMH during Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week.

WORLD MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK

May 2nd marked the beginning of World Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week. Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week aims to reduce stigma, spread good practice and help women and families impacted by perinatal mental health problems to feel seen, heard and supported.

The Specialist perinatal mental health teams across the Directorate organised a number of events to support emotional wellbeing during pregnancy and the perinatal period.

There are approximately 60,000 births in Ireland each year. Up to one-fifth of women will have some mental health problems in pregnancy and the year post delivery. Depression and anxiety are the most common mental health problems in pregnancy. These affect about 10 to 15 out of every 100 pregnant women and the severity can vary. Increased numbers of

women have been referred to Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Services during COVID-19. Raising awareness of the support available to women is critical.

The Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Model of Care is based on an integrated approach in which mental health services are embedded within Ireland South services. All women attending our maternity services are asked about their mental health by their midwife or obstetrician and can be referred to mental health services where clinically indicated.

Thank you to our wonderful Specialist Perinatal Mental Health team who continuously raise public and professional awareness of perinatal mental health problems and advocate for women affected by it by changing attitudes and helping families access the information, care and support they need to recover.

UHK Maternity Services win Team of the Year

By Janice McHugh, UHK



Dillon our CMS Bereavement & Mairead O'Sullivan our Infant Feeding Co-Ordinator and the Team of the Year award.

Team of the year for UHK 2022 was presented to Maternity Services University Hospital Kerry. The award was accepted by Dr Paul Hughes Clinical Lead on behalf of Maternity services and Ms Sandra O'Connor Director of Midwifery. Dr Hughes spoke about the team, service improvements and the collaboration and support across the multi-disciplinary team to achieve the high standards for patient-centred care in maternity services at University Hospital Kerry.

Below are quotes from patient testimonials regarding Carrie from women and families who have experienced pregnancy loss and were supported through this loss by Carrie.

"My husband and I sadly required the services of Carrie on two occasions last year. We never would have wanted the misfortune of needing this service, but how fortunate we were that Carrie was the person we met. She provided exemplary care for myself and my husband during some of the most devastating and heart-breaking moments of our lives. She provided her time and care in the most graceful, supportive, non-judgemental, gentle, kind and delicate manner. I never ever felt I was burdening her and whenever I talked to her, I always felt like she had an abundance of time for me. I never felt rushed or hurried. She always returned my calls promptly and was my go-to person when I ran into some complications after my second miscarriage. I felt so safe in her care and always felt comforted after our conversation. She possesses the unique yet essential skill of balancing medical information, practical care, reality and hope. I can't thank her

The People of UHK Awards celebrate the individuals and teams who go the extra mile and make a real difference to patients, families and colleagues. They focus on showing appreciation to those who have strived to put the care of patients and their families first. Members of staff from all departments or services within UHK are eligible for nomination and an award. UHK believes that people who go above and beyond and deliver an exceptional patient experience are worthy of this recognition. The categories for nomination came both from staff in UHK and the general public and included areas such as:

- Patient Care Award
- Leadership Award
- People of UHK Award
- Unsung Champion Award
- Team of the Year Award

Following on from hundreds of nominations the winners of the inaugural UHK People of UHK awards were announced and the success of Maternity Services was well represented at the award ceremony which took place in Ballygarry House Hotel in Tralee on 4th April 2022.

Maternity Services received three awards. Patient Care Award Winners were Carrie

enough for the help and care she gave me at the time of my miscarriages and even long after when I required further support due to complications. She would be truly deserving of this award"

"She was a light to us in one of the darkest moments of our lives when we lost our baby to miscarriage. It was our second miscarriage and mentally and emotionally was so hard for us, me especially. She was so compassionate, and supportive and went above and beyond for us and our little baby. We will never forget your generosity and support to us and our family, we will be eternally grateful".

"Mairead has been the best support I could have ever wished and hoped for as I chose to breastfeed my baby. She went over and above helping us in our journey. She is so passionate and is so obvious in everything she does, I would not be nearly 12 months into this breastfeeding journey if it was not for her. She embodies drive, determination, change and most of all passion in everything she does and beyond. She deserves recognition for all the work she does. You are more than a patient with her, she gets to

know you and your baby and remembers so much about you no matter how long it has been. The level of care is second to none."

The awards were in conjunction with the other categories awarded to our colleagues in the other specialities across the UHK campus. We recognise the whole team effort and approach across all multidisciplinary teams in UHK which made these inaugural awards successful and special. The award winners' photographs will be displayed on the "wall of fame" in University Hospital Kerry. Great credit goes to the management team for bringing the inaugural UHK awards from the table to reality.

Congratulations to all award nominees and winners were offered by Dr Paul Hughes Clinical Lead in Obstetrics and Ms Sandra O'Connor Director of Midwifery University Hospital Kerry, who offered thanks to all staff within maternity services for their unwavering dedication and commitment to the provision of care to ensure women, babies and their families remain at the centre of high-quality care in Maternity Services UHK.



Pictured above: Our CMS Bereavement Carrie Dillon accepted a Patient Care Award. The Patient Care award is very special in that the service users voted for Carrie.



Pictured above: Our Infant Feeding Co-ordinator Mairead O'Sullivan also received a "Patient Care Award" as voted by the public and service users. The quote below reflects the dedication and passion shown by Mairead who tirelessly supports the women of Kerry in their infant feeding journey.

Ireland South launches Recipe Book for women with Gestational Diabetes

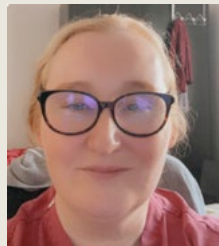


Congratulations to Linda Culliney, Clinical Specialist Diabetes Dietician, CUMH, Louise O'Mahony, Diabetes Specialist Dietician, CUMH, Laura O'Driscoll, Nutritional Sciences student at UCC, Ali Morrison, Nutritional Sciences student at UCC and Aoife Ryan, Registered Dietician & Senior Lecturer at UCC who recently launched a Home Cooking For Gestational Diabetes Recipe Book, a fantastic resource that provides simple everyday meal and snack recipes for women with Gestational Diabetes.

Many women feel so much uncertainty about what to eat and when to eat when they first get a diagnosis of gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM). They understand that the most important way to control their blood glucose levels is using food and physical activity but knowing how to put this into practice can be more challenging. Every woman should be offered the opportunity to see a dietitian when they are diagnosed with GDM which will help them to understand how good food choices can help to control their blood glucose levels and at the same time meet their nutritional needs and those

of their growing baby. Following the dietary advice for gestational diabetes does not mean food choices should be boring, bland or repetitive. With some advanced planning and sensible shopping, it is possible to enjoy a varied, nutritious and satisfying diet - during and after pregnancy.

"This book is an excellent resource for anyone that is pregnant and indeed anyone with an interest in healthy eating and specifically those that are trying to maintain a low GI diet. These recipes have been designed for busy women and their partners and are suitable for all the family to enjoy."



Dr Mairead O'Riordan
Consultant in Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Cork University Maternity Hospital

The recipe book is available on our website <https://irelandsouthwid.cumh.hse.ie/maternity-care/diabetes-and-pregnancy/>

Why Breakfast is so important

By Linda Culliney, Registered Dietician at CUMH



Breakfast meaning breaking the fast is often called the 'most important meal of the day' and for good reason. Breakfast kick starts your metabolism helping you burn calories throughout the day. It gives you the energy you need at work and helps you to focus better. Many studies have linked having breakfast with overall good health and a lower risk of being overweight or developing diabetes or heart disease. Breakfast also helps you meet recommended levels of important vitamins and minerals. People who eat a breakfast generally have higher intakes of fruit, wholegrains and dairy.

Benefits of having a breakfast:

- Provides energy and helps you perform at your best
- Makes you more alert and helps you focus
- Improves mood and mental health
- Helps you to maintain a healthy weight
- Helps you consume less fat during the day and reduces snacking
- Helps you meet your recommendations for fruit and vegetables
- Helps you have a higher calcium and fibre intake.

It's often easy to skip breakfast due to our busy morning schedules with 1/3 of people reporting regularly skipping breakfast. If your morning is hectic try to plan ahead by preparing your breakfast the night before (e.g overnight oats). Starting the day with a high-fibre and protein-rich meal can keep you full for longer and help avoid unnecessary snacking.

Making good choices:

It is important to 'break the fast' the right way. Eating a high-sugar food for breakfast e.g. a muffin or sugar-coated cereal will not add any health benefits. Indeed, this will lead to a blood sugar spike followed by an energy crash and often a feeling of early hunger.

Choose a savoury breakfast over a sweet one when possible. Use slow-release carbohydrates (those high in fibre) and add healthy fats and protein when possible.

We have included some recipes on the following pages as suggestions.



EGG MUFFINS AND RYE TOAST

SERVES 4 (2 muffins = 1 serving) | **PREP TIME** 10 mins | **COOK TIME** 15 - 20 mins

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS

1 tbsp. olive oil
 1 red pepper, diced
 2 spring onions, diced
 150g broccoli florets
 3 medium button mushrooms, diced
 6 eggs
 100ml low-fat milk
 1-2 chives, roughly chopped
 4 slices rye bread or suitable alternative, 1 slice per person
 Light cream cheese - 4 tablespoons (1 tbsp. per serve)

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

Typical Values	per serving
Energy	303kcal
Carbohydrate	24g
Fat	13g
Protein	20g
Fibre	4.3g

Carbohydrate content without counting vegetables = 20g

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C (fan)/gas-mark 4.
2. Use ½ tbsp. of olive oil to grease the muffin tin (8 hole).
3. Use ½ tbsp. olive oil to sauté the peppers and onions until soft and then add the broccoli and mushrooms.
4. Once sautéed, allow to cool down.
5. Whisk the eggs and add the milk and the chives and mix these into the eggs. Once the vegetables have adequately cooled, add them into the egg mix.
6. Divide the mix evenly between 8 muffin holes.
7. Bake for 15-20 mins – pierce with a knife to ensure the muffins are cooked through.
8. Toast rye bread until golden and spread cream cheese evenly on top.

Serve this with 2 egg muffins and enjoy!

Note: Egg muffin alone can be taken as a carbohydrate-free snack or combined with two slices of bread as a lunch option.



CHICKEN FRITTATA

Vegetarian

The perfect breakfast to use up leftover potatoes from the day before. Great to make 3 servings and use one serving as a snack later in the day or before bed. Try cooking an extra chicken breast with dinner the night before or use leftover roast chicken to save time.

SERVES 3
PREP TIME 5 mins
COOK TIME 30 mins

INGREDIENTS

250g baby potatoes, diced
 100g asparagus
 200g chicken, diced
 1 tbsp. olive oil
 6 eggs
 40g reduced fat cheddar cheese, grated
 2 tomatoes
 2 spring onions
 1 bell pepper
 40g spinach, roughly chopped
 1 medium slice wholemeal toast
 5g low-fat spread

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

Typical Values	per serving
Energy	451kcal
Carbohydrate	33g
Fat	17g
Protein	37g
Fibre	6.7g

Carbohydrate content without counting vegetables = 28g

METHOD

1. Steam baby potatoes and asparagus for approximately 15 mins until soft. Once baby potatoes have been steamed, dice them.
2. Boil/oven bake the chicken for 15-20 mins and ensure it is cooked through.
3. Boil/oven bake the chicken for 15-20 mins and ensure it is cooked through.
4. In a large bowl, crack in the eggs and beat together. Add in half the grated cheddar to the eggs and mix up.
5. Add in the tomato, spring onion, pepper, spinach, baby potatoes and chicken to the egg mixture. Mix together to combine and pour the mixture into the pan.
6. Preheat the grill to 180°C/gas mark 4.
7. Allow the frittata to cook for 4-5 mins in the pan and sprinkle the remaining cheese on top.
8. Put the pan under the grill and leave to cook for 3-4 mins until cooked through and golden brown on top.
9. Remove from grill, garnish with fresh herbs e.g. basil, parsley or coriander and divide into 3 even slices.
10. Serve with 1 slice of wholemeal toast as tolerated and low-fat spread.



CORK CAMOGIE STAR AND COLPOSCOPY NURSE LAURA TREACY DISCUSSES THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-CARE

“If I don’t look after myself, my body will let me know,” says Laura Treacy, dual All-Star and four-time All-Ireland Winner. Laura is also a Colposcopy Nurse at Ireland South based in St Finbarrs Hospital, Cork.

Laura is in her 11th season with Cork and knows the importance of taking care of herself to maintain performance at senior level. Laura is always chasing the clock, sometimes training up to 5 times a week with Cork and her club, Killeagh. *“We give so much to others in this profession, it’s so important to take time back for ourselves. I love what I do and I’m passionate about women’s health, but we must start with our own health.”* Although her schedule is jam-packed, her role allows her to maintain a good work/life balance, spending quality time with her family, boyfriend and friends.

Laura finds meditation and journaling really helpful and she always aims for eight hours sleep a night.

In her role as a Colposcopy nurse, Laura knows the importance of a healthy diet and lifestyle. She maintains a good nutritional diet, tracking her protein intake and always planning meals in advance. She is always on the lookout for more recipe ideas and finds Instagram a useful source for meal ideas. Whilst social media is great for tips and inspiration, she stresses the importance of getting advice from trusted sources. *“It takes time to understand what works best for you, social media can spread mis-information about diet and exercise,”* says Laura.

Women’s Sport is finally taking centre stage with more and more people talking about

camogie and women’s sport in general. In the 10 years that Laura is playing with Cork, she is seeing changes in people’s attitudes. However, periods are still an unspoken obstacle for women in sport. Unfortunately, female participation in sport starts to plummet early, typically in early teens, when anxiety surrounding menstruation sets in. *“The tide is turning when it comes to periods and sport but there is still a lot of work to be done in normalising menstrual health awareness in sport. Training should alternate around different times of the month and every woman’s cycle is unique to them,”* says Laura. The GAA now has resources for educating coaches and players about menstruation. *“We need to support women in a way that allows them to really get a lot more out of their sporting careers and a general enjoyment of sport.”*

In August, despite Cork having a fantastic campaign throughout 21/22, Laura and the rest of the Cork team were beaten by a point in the All-Ireland Camogie Final by rivals Kilkenny. We have no doubt we will be cheering Laura and the Cork Camogie team on in Croke Park next year.



Pictured above: Laura receives her All-Star award in March 2022 with Uachtaran Hilda Breslin and Ard Stuirthoir Sinead McNulty.



Welcome
Dr Coleen
Cormack,
Psychologist
for Staff
Support &
Wellbeing

I’m delighted to have taken up the role of Psychologist for Staff Support & Wellbeing here in Ireland South Women and Infants Directorate. I look forward to promoting the mental health and wellbeing of staff across the organisation and providing a supportive

and responsive service. I would very much like to hear from you about how I can be of best service to you. I have already had the opportunity to meet with some of you and I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible in the coming months.



THE IMPORTANCE OF EXERCISE FOR PERI-MENOPAUSAL AND MENOPAUSAL WOMEN

By Liz Barry, Deputy Physiotherapy Manager CUH/CUMH

Menopause is the time in a woman's life when her periods have stopped for over 12 months. Perimenopause is the time leading up to this when periods can be irregular and women start to experience symptoms of menopause. It can last for a number of years.

Menopausal symptoms can include difficulty sleeping, brain fog, hot flushes, mood changes, headaches, joint pains, low sex drive, vaginal dryness and bladder problems.

Exercise can be very beneficial for perimenopausal (the years leading up to menopause), menopausal and post-menopausal (the years after periods have stopped) women.

1. It can reduce the risk of heart disease - with the decrease in the hormone oestrogen women have the same risk of heart disease as men. Exercise can help to maintain healthy blood pressure and

cholesterol levels as well as reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke.

2. It can help maintain bone density and reduce the risk of osteoporosis and bone fractures.
3. It can help to reduce body fat and maintain healthy body weight. This reduces the risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes and some cancers such as breast, colon and endometrial cancer.
4. It helps to improve your mood and can help reduce stress.

There are two types of exercise which should be undertaken.

1. Muscle Strength Training

Adults over the age of 50 experience a more rapid loss of muscle mass called sarcopenia. Therefore, muscle strength training is really important to maintain muscle mass. Strength training also helps to stimulate bone density which is affected by the

lack of oestrogen experienced during the menopause.

Strength training should be done at least twice per week. It doesn't have to involve going to the gym and lifting weights or using resistance machines. It can be done in a class or at home. Pilates or yoga are great forms of strength training as you are using your body weight or weight of your limbs as resistance.

2. Cardiovascular Training

For a healthy heart and circulation, it is recommended that adults aged 19-64 do at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity exercise per week.

Moderate intensity means you are slightly out of breath but could maintain a conversation. This can include brisk walking, hiking, cycling, aqua aerobics, dancing or doubles tennis.

Vigorous exercise is when it is difficult to maintain a conversation while you exercise. Examples include jogging, swimming, skipping, tennis and team sports.

If this seems daunting and you don't undertake any regular exercise at the moment, start small. Start with a 10-minute walk 3 days per week and gradually increase this over a number of weeks. If you already walk regularly, try jogging for the last 60 seconds of your walk to stimulate your bones and increase your heart rate. Try to increase this over time.

Top tips for exercising

Consistency is key so always pick an exercise you enjoy as you will be more motivated to do it and feel good after it.

Try exercising with a friend, family member or group to help keep you accountable.

Plan your exercise so that it becomes part of your daily routine. Build it onto an existing

habit. For example, perform 10 squats, 10 calf raises and 10 biceps curls using a water bottle or light weight as resistance while you wait for the kettle to boil. Leave your weight beside the kettle to remind you to do it. Incorporate your walk as part of your daily commute to work.

Keep breathing while you exercise – holding your breath, breathing in a shallow manner or pulling in your tummy muscles while you exercise increases pressure on your pelvic organs and doesn't allow your pelvic floor muscles to work effectively to support them.

Wear comfortable clothing and footwear. Layers are good as you can remove them as you warm up. Pick material that is light and can absorb the moisture from when you sweat.

If you experience any issues with bladder or bowel control or have a feeling of heaviness in the vagina when exercising, please speak to your GP. They may offer you advice and/or refer you to a Gynaecologist and/or refer you to a registered physiotherapist with specialist experience in treating pelvic floor problems.

For further information on exercise guidelines:

www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/our-priority-programmes/heal/heal-docs/the-national-guidelines-on-physical-activity-for-ireland.pdf (pages 13-18)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1054541/physical-activity-for-adults-and-older-adults.pdf

For further information on the menopause go to <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/menopause/>

or download the free Balance app to your device or smartphone or read "Preparing for the Perimenopause and Menopause" by Dr Louise Newson.

EDUCATION

“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.”- W.B Yeats.

By Priscilla Lyons, Clinical Midwife Manager 2/
Acting Clinical Placement Co-Ordinator, Maternity
Services, University Hospital Kerry.



Pictured above: Eleanor Barry, Priscilla Lyons, Clodagh Queally, Linda O'Sullivan and Janet Norberg presented with a voucher for Ballygarry House Hotel.

In May 2021 we welcomed student midwives and student public health nurses to the maternity services of University Hospital Kerry (UHK). This was a new initiative for the unit but a very welcomed one. The maternity services in UHK have been a long-standing site for the education of students since its beginning, collaborating closely with both Munster

Technology University and University College Cork. The maternity services of UHK have to date facilitated placements for student general nurses, student mental health nurses and student doctors. The addition of student midwives and student public health nurses will further enhance and develop the clinical learning environment and provide the learning opportunities

required by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI). Additionally, student placement promotes and develops education for both students and staff while all the time providing a high-quality service to the women of Kerry and beyond.

The maternity services of UHK have very valued and knowledgeable nurses and midwives that have great experience and familiarity in nursing and midwifery services in Kerry. Sharing this with students is paramount to nursing and midwifery progression, planning and advancement. Being part of a co-located maternity unit in UHK allows for broad exposure to services and support for women's health and maternity care.

September 2021 saw the introduction of a new role of 'Clinical Placement Co-Ordinator' into the maternity services in UHK. Priscilla Lyons took up this post with the priority being to prepare the learning environment, support the integration of student

midwives/student public health nurses into the multi-disciplinary teams and support and encourage overall continuous learning and positive work culture. Through workshops, preceptor education study days and collaboration with the various teams in UHK and CUMH, students have thus far enjoyed their placements, achieving their learning objectives/outcomes and competencies appropriate to their level of training.

As part of quality improvement, Priscilla has introduced an evaluation for students to complete at the conclusion of their placement. The feedback has been extremely positive across all areas of the maternity service in UHK. As part of this feedback, our Fetal Assessment Unit has been deemed the highlight of the student placement for 2021. The staff midwives working in Fetal Assessment Unit have been acknowledged for this with a gift kindly sponsored by the SSWHG Maternity Directorate. We look forward to having students in 2022 and beyond.

THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME QUOTES FROM FEEDBACK RECEIVED FROM 2ND-YEAR STUDENT MIDWIVES.

“The support in UHK has been wonderful. I felt very supported and learnt a lot.”

“I was amazed at the time staff midwives gave me and how much they included me in caring for women.”

“Staff were so kind and eager to teach me things. It was great to work in a smaller unit and be more involved in direct patient care.”



SEPTEMBER 2022: CHILDREN FIRST AWARENESS MONTH

In 2013 the World Health Organisation acknowledged that in the European Region alone a conservative estimate is that child maltreatment affects 18 million children and 90 per cent goes undetected. The important role of health care staff in recognising and reporting child welfare and protection concerns is widely acknowledged. The SSWHG Children First Operational Steering Committee has designated September as a month for raising awareness about Children First. Each hospital within the Ireland South Women and Infants Directorate will run events during

September and will be supported by the HSE Children First Training and Development Officers, who will be delivering a series of online briefings and online Mandated Persons Training Workshops.

In Ireland the Children First Act 2015, places legal responsibilities on many professionals (Mandated Persons) to report 'harm' to Tusla Child and Family Agency, when a mandated person becomes aware of, suspects or when disclosure of abuse is made to them through the course of their employment.

The harm could have occurred in the past e.g. the retrospective disclosure of child abuse by an adult, or be an ongoing or potential risk in the future. The 2015 Act also requires Mandated Persons if requested, to assist Tusla in assessing a concern which is the subject of a mandated report.

Under the 2015 Act, 'relevant services' (those that provide services to children) are required to undertake risk assessments of harm to a child availing of the service and to develop a Child

Safeguarding Statement. To be Children First compliant, all staff must complete the HSE Children First e-learning module every three years and must be aware of where to access the HSE Child Protection and Welfare Policy.

Each of the four Maternity Units now has a dedicated Social Work service. If you require any further information or wish to discuss a child protection or welfare concern, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Hospital	Name	Contact Number
University Hospital Kerry	Caitriona Goggin	066 7184060
Cork University Maternity Hospital	Aine Cahill	021 4920567
Tipperary University Hospital	Emma Moloney	052 6187604
Waterford University Hospital	Helen Donohue	086 7001301

Putting Children First

Know your responsibilities as a HSE Employee, Designated Officer or Mandated Person

Be familiar with relevant Children First legislation, policy and guidance

Complete the mandatory HSE Children First e-learning

Child Protection is everybody's responsibility

For more information visit www.hse.ie/childrenfirst

HSE Children First
National Office

Children
First

HSE | Seirbhís Sláinte
Níosa Feara
& Forbairt | Building a
Better Health
Service

Anu Undergraduate Gold and Scholar Medals in Obstetrics and Gynaecology



Final medical year students who have shown exceptional merit are celebrated at the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology in UCC.

Professor John R. Higgins and Dr Mairead O’Riordan were delighted to award the prestigious Anu Undergraduate Gold Medal to Oscar Dennehy and the Anu Undergraduate Scholar medal to Aoife Golden.

Congratulations to both Oscar and Aoife on their outstanding results.



Farewell to CUMH Doctors in Training

In July, we bid the 2021/22 NCHDs (non-consultant hospital doctors) farewell and thanked them for their dedication and hard work over the past year. We wish them all the best in their future careers and hope our paths will cross again soon.



Welcoming New Doctors to CUMH in 2022

In July, the tradition of a ‘welcome breakfast’ on the 5th floor corridor returned to celebrate the new NCHDs (non-consultant hospital doctors) joining CUMH.

The NCHDs joined Professor John R. Higgins, Clinical Director, Miriam Lyons, General Manager and Grainne Moloney, Business Manager, alongside a number of consultants and senior midwifery staff for a group photo at the front of the building. The photo is now on display on the 5th floor.

“It is wonderful to welcome our new team of doctors to CUMH. We look forward to working alongside them to provide care to the women and infants of Ireland South” - Professor John R. Higgins.



Hats off to Graduates

Congratulations to our colleague, Nilima Pandit, who celebrated her doctorate from UCC on 13th April, and to Graduates from the Higher Diploma in Midwifery who received their award from the School of Nursing and Midwifery on 9th May.

Graduates from the Higher Diploma in Midwifery who attended the award ceremony in the School on 9th May:

Siobhan Canning, Roisin Carroll, Siobhan Clancy, Amaia Coca Bandres, Salvador Espinar Higuera, Sara Fulgencio Prior, Meadh Gleeson, Maddalen Iturriagagoitia, Aileen Jinks, Gobnait Kelleher, Clara Laming, Kate Murphy, Vanessa O'Farrell, Bronah O'Sullivan, Claire O'Sullivan, Deirdre O'Sullivan,

Julie O'Sullivan, Karen O'Sullivan, Almudena Piñero Suárez, Ramachandran Rajendiran, Kathy Robinson, Marion Roche, Gincy Shine Panicker.



Pictured above: Nilima Pandit celebrating her Doctorate from UCC on 13th April.

FLU SEASON PREPARATION ACROSS IRELAND SOUTH

Another influenza season is right around the corner. It is so important that we protect ourselves, our loved ones, our patients and community from flu. Staff will be notified as soon as vaccines become available shortly.





Cork University Maternity Hospital



University Hospital Kerry



University Hospital Waterford



Tipperary University Hospital

Have you got a story?

Thank you to all staff who contributed to this edition of UltraNews.

If you have a story for a future edition, please contact **Elaine Harrington**, Communications Project Officer, eharrington@ucc.ie

I would love to hear from you!

Articles for inclusion in the next newsletter must be submitted no later than **Friday 11th November 2022**

