



**GRADUATE
ENTRY
MEDICAL
SCHOOL**
UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK
SCOIL LEIGHIS IONTRÁLA
IARCHEIME OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH



GRADUATE ENTRY MEDICAL SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

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GEMS Ten Year Anniversary and a new Head of School



Pictured at GEMS10 Left to Right: Fionn Clark (BMBS Year 4), Prof Deirdre McGrath (GEMS Director of Education), Prof Colum Dunne (GEMS Director of Research), Prof Mike Larvin (Former Head of School) and Prof Des Leddin (Head of School).



Prof Des Leddin



Prof Mike Larvin

2017 has been a big year for the Graduate Entry Medical School (GEMS) as students, staff, faculty, alumni and members of the local community celebrated its ten-year anniversary. Furthermore, this year saw the end of Professor Michael Larvin's term as Head of School and the appointment of Professor Des Leddin as interim Head of School.

Prof Larvin devoted much time and energy to further strengthening the School's vital relationships with GPs, hospital specialists and post-graduate trainees in both teaching and learning. He placed the student learning experience and improvements in patient health care locally firmly at the top of the agenda as Head of School. His leadership and mentorship will be an enduring legacy. All who were fortunate to have known him during his time here in the GEMS wish him the very

best in his new post at PU-RCSI, Perdana, Malaysia.

Prof Leddin has worked in Canada for 40 years as a gastroenterologist and has been involved in teaching in the GEMS almost since the time it was founded. He is Professor of Medicine at Dalhousie University and heads the Canadian Association of Gastroenterology policy committees on patient access to care and colon cancer screening, and the World Congress of Gastroenterology training committee. Earlier in his career, he was president of the Canadian Association of Gastroenterologists. He is a native of Limerick and, although the GEMS is technically located in Co Clare, he has been warmly welcomed by students, staff and faculty. Prof Leddin's clinical and research interests are in colon cancer, inflammatory bowel disease and patient access to care.



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GEMS students were active advocates of **Mental Health Awareness Week** on campus



Pictured above Left to Right: Prof Des Leddin (Head of School), Christian Cayabyab and Brigid Ferriter (BMBS Year 2 class reps).

Cook Book

This cookbook is a class representative initiative during Mental Health Week. Its aim is to provide busy students with nutritious and easy recipes that are perfect for their schedule. Taking care of one's physical health by eating properly and positively influences mental health. The students are now distributing the cook books in aid of Pieta house to spread the impact of this initiative.



Pictured Front: Charlotte Wilson (BMBS Year 2)
Pictured Left to Right: Esther Adebambi (BMBS Year 1), Natasha Khullar (BMBS Year 2), Hila Jazayeri (BMBS Year 1), Naomi David Thevathayalan (BMBS Year 2).

Puppy Love

The 2nd year class reps organised for Animal Heaven Animal Rescue to visit the School during Mental Health Week in GEMS. With the help of Jack, Prof Leddin's canine companion, the day was spent enjoying unconditional love and fun.

Animal therapy is a known stress reliever, made clear by the palpable stress reduction while students and staff got on the floor with the rescue dogs. This event is going to be repeated during pre-study week and during mental health week as part of green ribbon month in semester 2.



UL Teddy Bear Hospital

Limerick Mental Health Week is a week dedicated to the promotion of positive mental health in the community through public talks, workshops, exhibitions and events. UL's Teddy Bear Hospital participated by setting up a daylong mental health station and surgery station on Bedford Row in Limerick. The Teddy Bear Hospital Committee guided children through the process of a surgery using teddy bears. The committee also prompted children to match different descriptor emotions with emotions on a colour wheel. Children were reassured that it's okay to feel any of the emotions on the colour wheel and to tell a parent or doctor if they're feeling down for a long period of time.

International **Overdose Awareness Day** 2017

Dr Patrick O'Donnell, GP & Clinical Fellow in Social Inclusion co-hosted a number of events for International Overdose Awareness Day 2017. This was part of his work on the Partnership for Health Equity project, and the work at the clinics for marginalised groups in Limerick City. On Friday 1st of September, he collaborated with representatives from Novas Initiatives and the Ana Liffey Drug Project to run an information session at the EHS Health Hub for those at risk of overdose, their families and those who work in the area of harm reduction. Dr O'Donnell is currently the only GP in the Mid-West prescribing naloxone (a medication to reverse the effects of opiate overdose) as part of the HSE pilot programme.



Pictured Left to Right: Dr Patrick O'Donnell (GP & Clinical Fellow in Social Inclusion UL GEMS), Rachel O'Donoghue (Team Leader Ana Liffey Drug Project Mid-West) and Sinead Carey (Manager McGarry House Homeless Hostel & Novas).

Health Equity Donation to Ana Liffey Drug Project



GEMS students and Health Equity Project members presented a cheque to Aoife Marshall of the Ana Liffey Drug Project, with Prof Des Leddin (Head of School) and Dr Patrick O'Donnell (GP & Clinical Fellow in Social Inclusion UL GEMS).

The GEMS student Health Equity Project (<http://ulhep.weebly.com>)

raised over €600 to donate to local and national charities that work on the wider social determinants of health. Both the Ana Liffey Drug Project and the St Vincent de Paul Drop-in centre in Limerick city received much needed funding to help them to continue carrying out their important work. Both of these organisations host the weekly Partnership for Health Equity

GP clinics run by Dr Patrick O'Donnell, Clinical Fellow at UL GEMS. These clinics are specifically aimed at homeless people, people with addiction issues, undocumented migrants and other vulnerable people in Limerick City. Over the last year, 44 GEMS students have voluntarily attended the clinics to observe the work that goes on there.

Deep End Ireland 2017



Pictured Left to Right: Professor Susan Smith (Professor of General Practice Research, RCSI), Dr John Delap (GP Coolock, Dublin), Dr Edel McGinnity (GP Mulhuddart, Dublin) and Dr Patrick O'Donnell (GP & Clinical Fellow in Social Inclusion UL GEMS).

Dr Patrick O'Donnell was lead author on the first report of the Deep End Ireland group. This is a network of GPs working in areas of deprivation and with marginalised groups across the country. The report was co-written with Prof Susan Smith of RCSI, and it covers the work of the Deep End group to date and its plans. This report has been sent to all members of the ICGP, and is available from www.deepend.ie. The Deep End group had recently made representation to the Oireachtas Committee tasked with preparing the important Slaintecare report, and members had also met with Minister for Health Simon Harris to discuss issues faced by GPs working in areas of deprivation. Deep End Ireland GP's attended Leinster House to meet Minister for Health Simon Harris.

Healthy Limerick

Dr Patrick O'Donnell and Professor Des Leddin represented GEMS at the Healthy Limerick launch by Minister Kathleen Byrne at City Hall. Healthy Limerick is informed by the Healthy Ireland framework, which is the main overarching policy document for planning health and well-being services in Ireland for years to come. It is also informed by the social determinants approach to health and is about linking, supporting and progressing actions in the local community to improve health for all in the city.



Pictured Left to Right: Dr Pat Phelan (Vice President Academic & Registrar UL), Ruth Maher (Director of Strategic Projects and Transformation at University of Limerick) and Prof Des Leddin (GEMS Head of School).



Pictured Left to Right: Bedelia Collins (HSE Health Promotion), Marie Casey (Public Health, HSE Mid-West), Dr Patrick O'Donnell (UL GEMS), Maurice Hoare (HSE Social Inclusion), Mai Mannix (Public Health, HSE Mid-West).

Appointment of Liam Glynn as Professor of General Practice



Professor Liam Glynn

This summer, the faculty and staff of the GEMS were delighted to welcome Liam Glynn as the new Professor of General Practice to the Medical School. Professor Glynn has come from the National University of Ireland Galway where he was a senior academic in General Practice. He is a decorated researcher and medical educator as well as being a practising GP. He has built up and continues to lead multi-disciplinary research teams involving GPs, nurses, psychologists and engineers. His primary research interests are in preventive medicine with a focus on physical activity, knee arthritis, chronic kidney disease and diabetes including bringing technological solutions to healthcare through connected health and particularly m-health solutions. He has over 150 publications and 4 book chapters and over two thousand citations. Liam's practice is in Ballyvaughan, Co Clare where he has been an effective advocate for rural General Practice.

Upcoming GP Tutor Workshop: "Better Together" - New developments in General Practice Education and Research at GEMS, UL

A two-day General Practice education and research workshop will be held at the University of Limerick and Castletroy Park Hotel on 26th and 27th January 2018. GEMS is the only Medical School on this island that has a longitudinal integrated clerkship in General Practice. Guest speakers, David Hirsh and Sonia Saxena, will share their international experience of this model through lectures and interactive workshops. David Hirsh is co-founder of the International Consortium of Longitudinal Integrated Clerkships and Sonia Saxena is a leading international Primary Care researcher, educator and GP. While this workshop is primarily of interest to GPs and practices currently, or contemplating becoming involved with the clinical teaching and research programmes at UL, all healthcare professionals are welcome.

Dr. Soorej Jose Puthooppambil - WHO Secondment



HRI funded Dr. Soorej Jose Puthooppambil and Professor Anne MacFarlane

Dr. Soorej Jose Puthooppambil writes from Denmark about his work at the World Health Organisation (WHO)....

It is almost six months since I started my secondment with the Migration and Health Programme (MIG) at the WHO regional office for Europe in Copenhagen. It has been a humbling and enlightening experience to be part of a dynamic team that is pioneering efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of refugees and migrants in the European region.

As a public health researcher, knowledge translation i.e. transforming evidence into practices and policies is one of the areas that is very close to my heart. Working as a postdoctoral researcher with Prof Anne MacFarlane and colleagues at GEMS exposed me to knowledge translation through the participatory approach.

The World Health Organisation is one of the best places to work for individuals who are interested in knowledge translation in public health. For a public health researcher like me, it is an enriching experience to work at an organisation that is often called the global guardian of public health. The WHO provides plenty of opportunities to engage in activities that are highly likely to have an impact at international, national and local levels.

Dr Jon Salsberg, New Senior Lecturer in Primary Healthcare



Dr Jon Salsberg

Recently, Dr Jon Salsberg has joined the GEMS faculty as Senior Lecturer in Primary Healthcare. Jon, a native of Montreal, has come from McGill University Montreal Canada. He is co-author of *Canada's Guide to Researcher and Knowledge-User Collaboration in Health Research*, and was a founding member of *Participatory Research at McGill (PRAM)*. His research interests are in understanding the theory and practice of multi-stakeholder engagement for co-creating new knowledge and its translation into action in primary health care and community health. Jon

has undertaken partnered research involving a broad range of stakeholders including patients, health practitioners, community organisations, policy makers and health service decision-makers and has worked extensively with Indigenous communities, including more than 15 years with the ground-breaking *Kahnawake Schools Diabetes Prevention Project*.

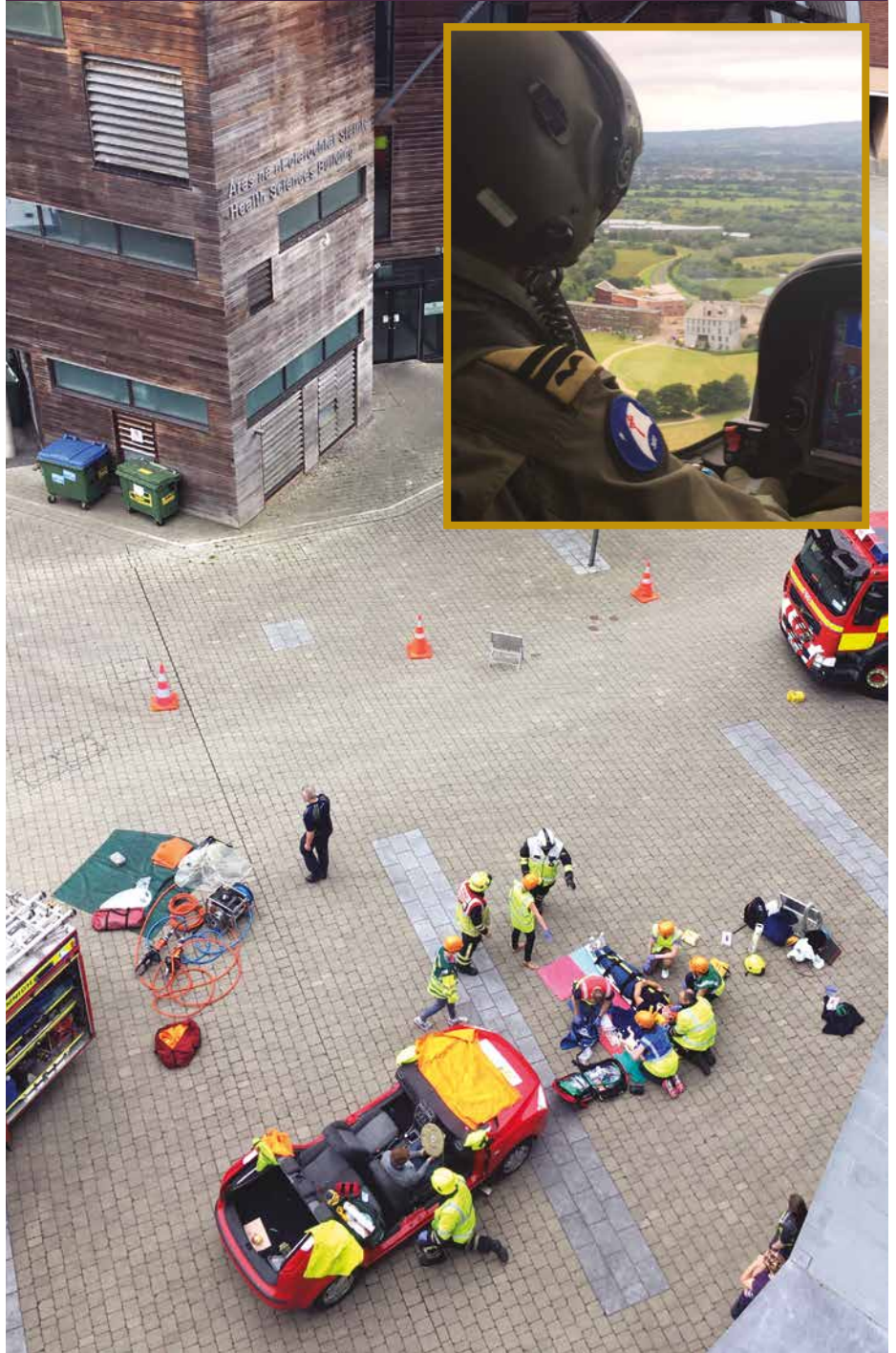
Gaelscoil Chaladh an Treoigh school visit GEMS



Dr Pat Kiely with the students.

At the end of October, we were delighted to get a visit from 3rd class Gaelscoil Chaladh an Treoigh which was organised by Dr Pat Kiely. The paramedics programme had arranged for an ambulance to be present and Frank Keane (Senior Fellow Paramedic studies) explained to the students what paramedics do. We then moved into the Medical School itself and Pat demonstrated some of our models and described the Anatomage, our virtual dissection table. Several of the GEMS technical staff and research staff were involved during the demonstrations, which were organised by Dr Margaret Toomey. Our objective was to explain to the students how important mathematics and the sciences are in everyday life and also to try and make them less afraid of doctors, ambulances and hospitals. It was a very enjoyable day, we had a lot of fun and there were lots of great questions.

Scenes from Outdoor Paramedic Training Day



Year 2 students on placement with NWS

In September, Paramedic Studies welcomed the second cohort of undergraduate students. Year 2 students began their yearlong placement with the North West Ambulance Service in the UK on 4th September. During this placement, the first of its kind, students will be exposed to high call volumes, diverse population and an established University based educational system.



Research Summer Graduations – August 2017

Dr Omar Abouazza, Dr Alan Macken and Dr Shaheel Sahebally graduated in the August conferring ceremony, all with MD's. Dr Abouazza and Dr Macken were both supervised by Prof Colum Dunne, GEMS Director of Research while Dr Sahebally was supervised by GEMS Professor of Surgery, Prof Calvin Coffey.



Pictured Left to Right: Prof Colum Dunne, Dr Omar Abouazza MD



Pictured Left to Right: Prof Colum Dunne, Dr Alan Macken MD

Paramedic Studies Practitioner Entry Year 1 2017-18



Paramedic Studies Undergraduate Year 1 2017-18



BMBS Year 1 2017-18



GIG FOR GHANA



Pictured: Chris Hadfield (centre) with GEMS students at Gig for Ghana.

On the 9th November 2017, astronaut Chris Hadfield blasted into Limerick to perform in the Gig For Ghana fundraising concert, an evening MC'd by Prof Des Leddin. This special evening involved not only a fantastic series of Irish musicians, but also gave attending GEMS students the unique opportunity to speak privately with Chris Hadfield and learn from his advice and experiences.

This event raised nearly 10,000 euros to support Ghana Medical Help's rural emergency medicine training project in partnership with UL GEMS and UHL. This translates to over 150 rural community-level nurses in northern Ghana in 2018 being trained in basic emergency medicine and being provided with medical kits. Ghana Medical Help is a Canadian charity founded in 2010 by GEMS student Kelly Hadfield, niece to astronaut Chris Hadfield. For inquiries or more information about this project, please contact Kelly at kelly@ghanamedicalhelp.com

Thanks to a private donor, Chris' autographed guitar as well as a beautiful picture of Ireland he took from space will be displayed in the GEMS CERC building at UHL for students to gain inspiration from.



MC: Prof Des Leddin



Event Organiser: Kelly Hadfield.

Donation from Year 4 Student Class Reps AY2016-17 - Paediatrics Ward in Midlands Regional Hospital, Portlaoise.

Year 4 AY2016-17 class reps agreed with the CAL manager to donate uncollected student deposits accumulated since 2014 to the Paediatrics Ward in the Midlands Regional Hospital, Portlaoise. Dr Paul Gallagher and his team currently take 12 to 15 students from the Year 4 Paediatrics discipline annually and they decided to put this donation of €250 towards an information screen for parents in the waiting room in the Paediatrics Ward.



Pictured left to right: Funke Owolabi (BMBS Year 4), Ivan Witt (BMBS Year 4) with Dr Paul Gallagher, Consultant Paediatrician in the Midlands Regional Hospital, Portlaoise.

OBGYN Tutor/ PhD candidate wins Award at International Meeting

Clinical Tutor and PhD candidate, Dr Khadijah Ismail presented her poster at the sixth International Conference on Foetal Growth. The presentation was titled 'Placental and umbilical cord morphometry of pregnancies with SGA infants', which is part of her PhD project under supervision of Prof Amanda Cotter, Prof Ailish Hannigan (UL GEMS) and Dr Keelin O'Donoghue (UCC). The presentation won an award for Best Short Oral Presentation. The conference was held in the Fota Island Resort, Cork and attended by 240 conference participants from 26 different countries. It was organised by the Perinatal Institute in partnership with the Irish National Perinatal Epidemiology Centre.



Dr Khadijah Ismail

GEMS 10: "What has been achieved at GEMS in ten short years is really remarkable"



Pictured at GEMS10: Prof Paul Finucane (Foundation Head of School) and Mairead Waters (Foundation School Manager).



Alumni and Faculty from the GEMS 2007 original intake class.

The Graduate Entry Medical School (GEMS) at the University of Limerick celebrated its 10th anniversary on Saturday 30th September. To mark the occasion, the founders, inaugural students, alumni, staff and leading academics in medical education from across the world including members of the public were invited to a celebration in the University Concert Hall. The event included keynote speeches from the Foundation Head of GEMS, Professor Paul Finucane and current Head of School, Professor Des Leddin, as well as panel discussions with faculty, students and patients. GEMS, the first Medical School established since the formation of the Irish State, has graduated 640 doctors who are now working in Ireland and all over the world. Since its foundation, research undertaken at GEMS has been at the cutting edge of medical advances globally. Every year more than 200 GEMS students undertake clinical placement rotating through five disciplines in six hospitals across Ireland. Additionally about 70 students undertake GP placements across the extended Primary Care networks reaching from Clare to Kerry and Westmeath to Wexford.

Prof Des Leddin said, "The impact of the school's engagement with the health care community all across Ireland is immeasurable and with UL Hospitals Group, GEMS brings the opportunity for in-depth, patient-centred research which is benefiting not only the members of the medical community in the region but also patients and their families... what has been achieved in ten short years is really remarkable".



Left to Right: Prof Pierce Grace (GEMS Clinical Adjunct) presenting a piece of art work to commemorate the occasion to Dr Des Fitzgerald (President, UL)



Left to Right: Prof Deirdre McGrath (GEMS Director of Education), Dr Gerry Burke (UMHL), Prof Paul Finucane (Foundation Head of School), Prof Collette Cowan (CEO, UHL), Prof Mary O'Sullivan (Former Dean, EHS), Prof Rachel Msetfi (Dean, EHS), Prof Des Leddin (Head of School), Dr Des Fitzgerald (President, UL), Prof Mike Larvin (Former Head of School), Mairead Waters (Foundation School Manager) and Dr John Moroney (GEMS Planning Committee).