



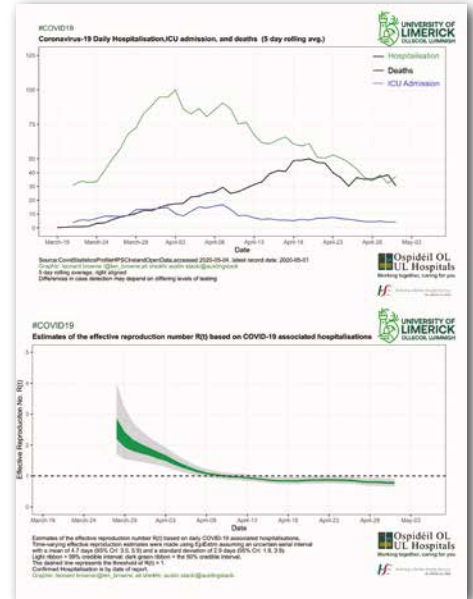
Covid-19 Infection in Ireland



Left to right: Dr Diana Prasad, Professor Austin Stack, Dr Anmarie White, Dr Lorcan Martyn

Professor Stack and Dr Leonard Browne with colleagues from Mathematics and Statistics, Professor Cathal Walsh and Dr Ali Sheik, have provided critical data on the epidemiology of Covid-19 infection in Ireland and its impact on daily hospitalisation rates and mortality. This ongoing body of work will serve to underpin a new research programme on the impact of Covid-19 disease in the Irish health system.

Professor Stack and members of the renal team at University Hospital Limerick (UHL) have been at the forefront of clinical services during the current Covid-19 pandemic. A huge multidisciplinary effort by the team at UHL have reduced the overall impact of the disease through effective primary and secondary preventive strategies.



UHL hospitalisations, ICU deaths, 5 day and reproductive number

Covid-19 – School of Medicine Working Remotely



Learning Objectives

(From previous week)

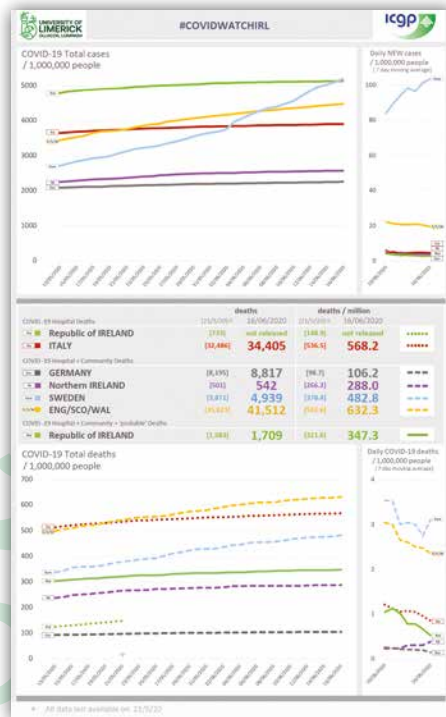
Left: Virtual team meeting of Administrative and Technical staff
Above: Online PBL session for BMBS students

When the University closed on 12th March, plans were very quickly put in place by the faculty and staff of the Medical School to move teaching and assessment online. Using various

technologies and online platforms, staff have continued to deliver the School's programmes as well as the background operational functions in an online forum. We recognise and

appreciate the fantastic amount of work and the extra effort by all faculty and staff in successfully ensuring the continuity of the School's work under the current circumstances.

COVIDWATCHIRL



Since early March, the School of Medicine disciplines of General Practice and public health have been heavily focused on working to mitigate effects of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. It has greatly affected all School of Medicine activities, but the safety of staff, students and the public at large is the priority now.

On 11th March, a rapid response was written to the British Medical Journal (BMJ) [Here](#) calling for urgent action on:

- » An information campaign for the general public
- » Redeployment of healthcare staff to bolster public health ranks
- » High volume testing
- » Effective quarantine of patients in home or in hospital

On 21st April, a second rapid response was written to the BMJ [Here](#) recognising the progress made on the above items, but also encouraging consideration of voluntary masking in certain situations for the general public and better protection

of those in residential settings. This latter point has been the harshest lesson learnt from the Irish response to Covid-19 so far.

To help provide accessible and trustworthy information, COVIDWATCHIRL have been releasing a daily update of the Covid-19 situation on the island of Ireland and other countries of interest. In this time of great uncertainty, everyone should inform themselves in order to provide a strong and assured voice to friends, family and beyond. These updates are posted on Twitter daily by Professor Glynn (@LiamGGlynn) and Dr Mike O'Callaghan (@mikey0callaghan) using the hashtag #COVIDWATCHIRL. These graphs and a wealth of other useful information can also be found in a new section on the UL main website (www.ul.ie/covid-home/covidwatchirl). Engagement and feedback is encouraged.

As lockdown restrictions are rolled back in the coming weeks and months, yet another challenge awaits; how to get the normal health service running again. Avoiding collateral damage from Covid-19 will involve ensuring public confidence in the health service and ensuring frontlines remain adequately staffed and protected. We wish the new cohort of Intern Doctors and other graduates from UL Health Sciences the very best and thank them for their contributions to the welfare of patients in the coming weeks and months.

Finally, examining emerging evidence describing lessons learned from other countries' responses to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, including use of masks, Apps, novel testing strategies and novel treatments will also be very important. However, it is likely that the seemingly straightforward approach of "Trace, Test and Treat" will underpin all efforts. Working hard on timely research has never been more important in order to contribute to this global discussion. Keep safe and see where everyone can pitch in to this global effort to reduce the damage caused by Covid-19.

Covid-19 Testing Marginalised Groups



Dr Patrick O'Donnell (Clinical Fellow in General Practice)

Dr Patrick O'Donnell has been advising HSE Social Inclusion on the Covid-19 testing and supported isolation of people from marginalised groups across the Mid-West. Patrick has been working closely with colleagues from NGOs and the HSE to do this. He has also been acting as a member of the HSE CHO3 Area Crisis Management Team since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic. This is a decision making body for the pandemic management response in healthcare settings across the Mid-West; including primary care, secondary care, public health & others. Dr O'Donnell advises on the needs of marginalised groups; people who are homeless, asylum seekers and people who use drugs.



Anne Harnett (Senior Lecturer in Clinical Pharmacology) in the UHL Pharmacy providing support to the trials

HRI Clinical Research Support Unit

The HRI Clinical Research Support Unit (HRI CRSU) based in the CERC building at University Hospital Limerick, is delighted to be currently supporting Dr Catherine Motherway on the *SPRINT- SARI* study. The *SPRINT- SARI* is an international, multi-centre, prospective, short period incidence observational study of patients in participating hospitals and intensive care units (ICUs) with severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) and has now been adapted to study Covid-19 positive patients. The study started recruitment in April. With support from Anne Harnett (Senior Lecturer in Clinical Pharmacology), the HRI CRSU provides both nursing support and study coordination for the study. CNM11 Siobhan Egan is the study lead for the Unit.

HPV Jersey Initiative in Support of the HPV Vaccine and in Memory of Laura Brennan



Back Row (L-R): Harry Mercer, Oisín O'Domhnaill, Sam Gaine, Benjamin Melvin, Eogháin Quinn, Aine O Flynn, Aisling Egan. Front Row (L-R): Kate O'Marcaigh, Enda Gavin, Oisín O'Donnell, Katriona Fox, Darragh Rooney, Adam Farrell

Thank you to everyone who took part in the School of Medicine – HPV Jersey Initiative. 53 jerseys were made for BMBS students and staff. The purpose of the initiative was to promote the HPV vaccine, which vaccinates against the Human Papillomavirus (HPV), which can cause cervical cancer and other HPV related cancers. The initiative gained widespread attention on social media both locally and nationally. For more information about Laura's story and the HPV vaccine please see links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hC9FgYh4Xtg>

<https://www.rte.ie/player/movie/laura-brennan-this-is-me/102220328261>

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/pubinfo/schoolprog/hpv/about/>

Balint in the Time of Covid-19



Group Collage of some of the participants involved in the Project



An article by Dr G Rafferty MB MRCPI MRCPsych MCPsych, Dr Mara Petrut MB BCh, Professor David Meagher MD, PhD, MRCPsych, Dr John McFarland MD MRCPsych.

M.F Weiner wrote in the Journal of Medical Economics in 1976 "Don't waste a crisis - your patient's or your own", recognising that a medical crisis can be used to improve aspects of personality, mental health or lifestyle. Unfortunately, these words have become particularly relevant. The following is a brief summary of one of the adaptations that has been made in the Department of Psychiatry.

The Mid-Western Psychiatric Services, under the University of Limerick Deanery, are geographically dispersed, ranging from Clare to South Tipperary, providing services to over 150,000 people. In light of the immense and rapidly evolving challenges we are facing, we need to provide direct and timely support service users, but also importantly, to each other.

The Balint group is a reflective practice for clinicians focussing on psychodynamic aspects of clinical cases in order to emphasise the importance of the use of emotion and personal understanding in the Doctor's work and the therapeutic potential of the clinician-patient relationship. They have been a regular feature of the Day Release Programme in the Mid-West for several years and are considered mandatory training for Basic Specialist Trainees (BSTs) in Psychiatry in Ireland.

A number of studies correlate the use of Balint groups to the professional well-being of Doctors, development of skills, increased levels of empathy and distress tolerance. These are clearly vital aspects at a time of dynamic and unpredictable challenges.

Nonetheless, local Balint groups have been disrupted by current social distancing measures, due to a focus on reducing footfall across different clinical sites. In response, the NCHDs in our region have constructed an online Zoom Balint group, which has run for 8 weeks at the time of writing. The Zoom platform has a number of features (such as muting video and auditory contributions) that particularly suit the very process-driven format of Balint, allowing individuals to speak safely around nonverbal criticism that can be moderated effectively.

Six Zoom groups have been completed to date and attendance ranges from 6-10, which is consistent with previous attendance at face-to-face meetings. 8 out of 19 BSTs completed a short survey, a 42% response rate, which was interpreted in context of the short time space of 2 days allowed for responses.

Out of those which responded, 5 trainees (63%) said they would strongly recommend the event to a colleague and 2 were passive responders that would recommend it to some extent. 75% felt that the format was extremely friendly and 25% as very friendly, emphasising the increased facility to relax and become comfortable in a group discussion that takes place in the virtual environment. 5 participants rated the experience as very helpful with 3 (37%) rating it extremely helpful. Half of the answers rated the quantity of information obtained as most of what was needed, with 37% rating it as all of what was needed.

Dr Khalifa Elmusharaf



Dr Khalifa Elmusharaf, Senior Lecturer in Public Health, has been elected a Fellow of the Faculty of Public Health of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of the United Kingdom (FPH) through distinction. This level of fellowship is a very prestigious award. It is offered to those who are recognised as distinguished through their outstanding achievements in public health practice, policy and research. Dr Elmusharaf will have the post-nominal letters (FFPH) placed after his name to indicate his new status as a Fellow of the Faculty of Public Health.

Prof Anne McFarlane



Professor Anne McFarlane, Chair of Primary Healthcare Research, has been awarded the School of Medicine Bohan Visiting Professor Programme at the University of Kansas Medical School, USA.

This is based on collaborations with Family Medicine Doctor Professor Joseph LeMaster, with whom Anne has shared interests around migrant health and participatory health research. Professor LeMaster is the

Chair of the Committee on Advancing the Science of Family Medicine (CASFM) in the North American Primary Care Research Group and previous Chair of the Participatory Health Research group in CASFM. He has extensive participatory research experience and strong international networks. Anne is delighted to be able to continue to work with him through this award. The focus of the visit will be on participatory approaches to implementation science in primary care settings.

Adjunct Clinical Professor Bart Ramsay

Professor Bart Ramsay is appreciative of his recent appointment as University of Limerick Adjunct Clinical Professor in Dermatology.

Bart was born in Warrington in the North of England to Irish parents and attended school and then RCSI in Dublin. After qualifying in medicine, his original career path was General Practice that he had seen first-hand through his father's work. However, during the 3rd year of his GP training, a keen interest and then a strong commitment to Dermatology was sparked during a medical job that included two weekly Dermatology clinics. He met Dr Sean O'Loughlin an excellent Dermatologist from County Mayo, recently back from training in the Mayo Clinic, who was an inspiring teacher. Working with Sean triggered a 'road to Damascus' desire to work in Dermatology which was confirmed after meeting Professor Sarah Rogers, another brilliant Dermatologist, who also encouraged him. Initial training was in Hume Street Skin and Cancer and Adelaide Hospitals.

Bart then worked in the University Dermatology Department at The Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle upon Tyne where he completed an MD Thesis as a Registrar on ways to reduce anthralin inflammation under the wing of an excellent mentor in Dr Cliff Lawrence. In quieter moments, Bart took up playing the five string classical banjo with lessons from David Miles, an all-England champion banjoist. From there it was to



Professor Bart Ramsay MD, FRCP (Edinburgh) MRCGP, MICGP, DCh, DObs

Senior Registrar training in Charing Cross and The Central Middlesex Hospitals before becoming a consultant in Whipps Cross and the Royal London Hospitals. En route he worked with Dr Jeff Cream in Charing Cross – surely the best ever name for a Dermatologist © – who in addition to being a superb Dermatologist was both a wonderful teacher/mentor and a very kind man who gently guided Bart into the fun world of Macintosh computers.

Bart moved back to Ireland in 1995, partly to enable his two children have an Irish education and then almost 6 years in private practice happened, as there was no public Dermatology post in UHL. When a public post arose in 2001, Bart was fortunately successful.

Then began a somewhat slow adventure trying to persuade anyone who would listen that Dermatology patients needed a proper department to help them. The

Hospitals Development Trust charity supported the vision brilliantly and in 2016 a purpose built Dermatology unit – The Charles Centre for Dermatology was born in the Leben Building in UHL. The development of an excellent multidisciplinary team of secretarial, clerical, clinical psychology, nurses and Doctors ably supported and encouraged by UHL hospital management has transformed the care of patients with skin disease. Dermatology overnight became the third highest specialty for new patient referrals. Just as there are many different treatment pathways with more than 10,000 patient attendances annually, Bart has multiple research interests in the area of dermatology with over sixty publications in peer review journals. Two current research strands include examining the role of meditation in patients with skin disease particularly pain syndromes and the use of reflectance confocal microscopy in the diagnosis of malignant melanoma. Bart has taught for 25 years in the excellent UL vocational training scheme for General Practice and has been involved with UL's medical students since the establishment of its Medical School in 2007, Bart has brought patients to the student lectures to enable students to hear first-hand the suffering associated with skin disease and how to alleviate it. Bart is currently Honorary Secretary of the Irish Association of Dermatologists. Bart's banjo playing is still a work in progress.

Adjunct Associate Clinical Professor Brian Casserly

A Laois native, Professor Brian Casserly graduated from University College Dublin with a degree in medicine MB.BCh.BAO (Honours) in 1999. He completed his internship and Senior House Officer training in the Mater Misericordiae Hospital Dublin (MRCPI).

Thereafter, he moved to United States and completed a three-year residency programme in a combination of Albany Medical School, New York and Tufts Medical School, Boston. Subsequently, he completed a fellowship in pulmonary, critical care and sleep medicine at Brown University, Rhode Island. At the end of that time, he became American Board certified in internal medicine, pulmonary, critical care and sleep medicine (IM, PCCM, DABSM). He joined the faculty in Brown University as an Assistant Professor of Medicine working for two years as a pulmonary/critical care, sleep consultant, and retains his adjunct professorial position in Brown University. During that time, he received numerous teaching awards; 2009-2010 - Awarded Pulmonary/ Critical Care and Sleep Fellowship Teaching Attending Award from Brown Pulmonary/ Critical Care and Sleep; 2010 - Certificate of Recognition for Exemplary Teaching in BIOL 3662



IMS III: Pulmonary; 2011 - The Dean's Excellence in Teaching Award for the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University as well as an Order of Merit from the American College of Physicians. He also developed his research interest in lung physiology and vascular biology. He has over 50 PubMed publications including Intensive Care Medicine Journal's article of the month; Casserly B, Osborne T, Gerlach H, Philips G, Marshall J C, Levy MM, Evaluating the use of low dose steroids in adult severe sepsis: results of the Surviving Sepsis Campaign (SSC). Intensive Care Med. 2012 Dec; 38(12):1946-54 and authored over 10 textbook chapters in pulmonary and critical care medicine.

Professor Casserly returned to Ireland after eight years in America to start working in his present position as Respiratory Consultant with a special interest in cystic fibrosis in University Hospital Limerick. In 2012, he became a fellow of RCPI (FRCPI) and continues as a post graduate trainer for the RCPI in general and respiratory medicine. He has twice received the School of Medicine adjunct research awards in 2013 and 2015. He is the National Coordinating Investigator for Ireland and Principle Site Investigator for multiple phase 3 clinical trials in COPD, pulmonary fibrosis and cystic fibrosis. He is an assistant editor for "Lung" Journal as well as reviewer for several prestigious peer-review journals. He is a key contributor to the development and delivery of the Medical School's United States Medical Licensing Exam preparatory programme and has supervised/co-supervised UL medical, masters, graduate diploma and PhD students. He has multiple investigator lead research projects on going, particularly in the area of exercise physiology in cystic fibrosis, while continuing a busy clinical practice in respiratory and general medicine in UHL.

Adjunct Associate Clinical Professor Alexander Fraser

Professor Alexander Fraser is a Consultant Rheumatologist and General Physician at University Hospital Limerick and Adjunct Associate Clinical Professor with the University of Limerick's School of Medicine.

Professor Fraser graduated with a degree in medicine from Trinity College Dublin in 1991. He began his career in Rheumatology in 1996 and the following year was appointed Specialist Registrar in Rheumatology at the Yorkshire Deanery, England.

Training with Professor Emery's group in Leeds, he developed a research interest in the clinical, immunological and therapeutic aspects of Rheumatoid Arthritis, Psoriatic Arthritis and the Seronegative Spondyloarthropathies. He was appointed Consultant Rheumatologist and Honorary Senior Lecturer at the Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, working at The Leeds General Infirmary and St James University Hospital in October 2001. Working closely with Professor Paul Emery and Professor Doug Veale he has published on biomarkers of cartilage turnover and on angiogenesis, vascularity and inflammation in early and established arthritis.



Professor Fraser returned to Ireland in 2006 taking up his post as Consultant Rheumatologist General Physician in the Mid-West region. Since his return to Ireland, he has led the Rheumatology service for the mid-west and has received recognition nationally for his expertise in the area of Rheumatology, which led to his appointment as President of the Irish Society for Rheumatology from 2016 to 2018.

Professor Fraser's continued commitment to education and research in his field is visible through his contribution to

national and university undergraduate and postgraduate education and training programmes. His participation in international clinical trials and numerous investigator led studies has resulted in him publishing extensively in many areas, including musculoskeletal ultrasound in rheumatology, biomarkers for DMARD efficacy in inflammatory arthritis, Behcets Disease and exercise, diet, sleep and cardiovascular risk in rheumatoid arthritis in addition to mentoring and co-supervising PhD students to completion. He is a member of the Irish Arthritis and Rheumatology Collaboration Research Committee, the Arthritis Ireland Research Committee, the Irish National Rare Diseases Clinical Advisory Group (CAG) and Chair of the Croom Rheumatology Research Charity.

Current collaborators include Professor Gavin Davey, Trinity College Dublin Department of Molecular Medicine, Professor Gerry Wilson, Arthritis Ireland Chair in Rheumatology, Professor Norelee Kennedy, VPR UL and the Academic Department of Physiotherapy, University of Limerick and Professor Austin Stack, Professor of Medicine at the School of Medicine.

New Equipment for South Tipperary General Hospital



Left to right: Mary Burke (Deputy Manager, STGH), Róisín Monaghan (Clinical Academic Liaison Manager), Aidan O'Dowd (BMBS Year 3), Emma Keegan (BMBS Year 3) and Liz Ryan (Resuscitation Officer, STGH)

The Resuscitation Department at South Tipperary General Hospital (STGH) have taken commission of two new resuscitation mannequins provided by University of Limerick through its medical education fund.

Liz Ryan, Senior Resuscitation Officer, is delighted with the new equipment. "It's great to have the most up-to-date equipment to train with, both students and staff at STGH will benefit".

BMBS Year 3 students receive certified basic life support (BLS) training while on placement in Clonmel and some avail of the ACLS courses provided.

New Study Pods at St Luke's General Hospital



A number of study pods have recently been installed along the corridor of the Library and Education Centre at St. Luke's General Hospital, Kilkenny (SLK). Each of the pods are acoustically wrapped to provide noise reduction and

are fitted with power, data and USB charging points.

The Kilkenny Medical Education Liaison Group (MELG) funded this project. The MELG, which includes members from the UL School of Medicine and St. Luke's Hospital, manages the clinical training budget for medical students at the Kilkenny site. They will allow for provision of a greater emphasis on problem-based and group learning, as well as greater social interaction and discussion to encourage engagement in learning.

This very worthwhile project will directly affect the education, training and research of Year 3 and 4 medical students.

University of Limerick BMBS Year 3 Education Bursaries AY18-19

The Medical School has introduced a student education bursary for BMBS Year 3 students who have given high performances in the disciplines of Surgery and Medicine in AY18-19. These are funded through the Medical Education Liaison Groups (MELG) in the affiliated hospital sites.

In the South Tipperary General Hospital Clonmel, students Aoife O'Halloran and Kathleen Vannelli were the chosen recipients of this bursary from their time on clinical placement.

In the Portiuncula University Hospital, Ballinasloe, students Susan Cameron and Frances Fallon were the chosen recipients of this bursary from their time on clinical placement.

In the Midlands Regional Hospital, Tullamore, students Mary Vu and Conor Abbott were the chosen recipients of this bursary from their time on clinical placement.

In St. Luke's General Hospital, Kilkenny, students Natalie Coyle and Callie Alt were the chosen recipients of this bursary from their time on clinical placement.

Dr Sophie Miller Memorial Prize



Dr Kevin Byrnes PhD

Dr Kevin Byrnes, a recent PhD student working under the supervision of Profs Calvin Coffey and Kieran McDermott, was announced as the winner of the Dr Sophie Miller Memorial prize from the Anatomical Society (<https://www.anatsoc.org.uk/>). This Society founded in 1887, is one of the oldest learned Societies and has charitable status. Its aims are to promote, develop and advance research and education in all aspects of anatomical science in Great Britain and Ireland. As the first recipient of the prize, Kevin will deliver a short lecture at the winter meeting of the Anatomical Society later this year as well as receiving a monetary prize and certificate.

Dr Sophie Miller was an Anatomical Society funded PhD student from 2011-2014 at Cambridge University. She investigated olfactory ensheathing cells (OECs) and their potential for transplant-mediated repair

of the central nervous system. She sadly passed away in December 2016 and her family have generously provided support for young and aspiring scientists through The Anatomical Society in her memory.

This award is for early career researchers to present their own unpublished or early published anatomical science research and Kevin was awarded the prize for his research on the development of the mesentery and the mesenteric-based model of abdominal compartmentalisation.

Kevin also recently successfully defended his PhD in the School of Medicine in March, being one of the first PhD vivas to be held remotely using Skype for Business. Kevin is currently a surgical trainee in Beaumont Hospital, Dublin. Alexandra Cremona, Khadijah Ismail and Rebecca Anderson also passed their PhD vivas in 2020 using the same online remote technology.

Research Graduations January 2020



Dr Pat Kiely (Senior Lecturer in Molecular Science), Dr Sheri Hayes PhD, Dr Maurice O'Connell PhD, and Prof Cathal Walsh (Department of Mathematics and Statistics)



Dr Elaine Shanahan MD

BMBS January 2020 Graduations



Left to Right: Dr John Matthew Fallon, Dr Peter Loughman, Professor Deirdre McGrath (Head of School), Dr Hannah Jane Mulholland, Dr David Edmond Thornton

BMBS April 2020 Graduations



UL President, Dr Des Fitzgerald

Congratulations to our newest 132 graduates from the UL School of Medicine's Bachelor of Medicine Bachelor of Surgery Class of 2020, on the occasion of graduating from their BMBS Programme.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they were conferred in absentia by University of Limerick President Dr Des Fitzgerald on Monday 27 April 2020 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G8FWXKQfZ-Q>

Graduating Class of 2020 Student Medal and Prize Winners

First Prize for Overall Performance in the Bachelor of Medicine Bachelor of Surgery Degree Programme

Dr Natalie Coyle

First Prize in the Discipline of Medicine

Dr Megan Crosby

First Prize in the Discipline of Surgery

Dr Natalie Coyle

First Prize in Professional Competencies

Dr Oisín O'Donnell

First Prize in the Discipline of Paediatrics

Dr Natalie Coyle

First Prize in the Discipline of Obstetrics and Gynaecology

Dr Natalie Coyle

First Prize in the Discipline of Psychiatry

Dr Philip Nolan

First Prize in the Discipline of General Practice/Primary Care

Dr Róisín Gryson

Niall O'Higgins Medal

Dr Michael Popoola

The UL Hospital Group is partnered academically with the University of Limerick and works closely with the School of Medicine to provide undergraduate and postgraduate education and training across several campuses and in several disciplines. The Niall O'Higgins Medal was established in Professor O'Higgins' honour and symbolises the increasing bonds between our UL Hospital Group and the University of Limerick. The prize is awarded for the best performance in the Medicine and Surgical final clinical exams.

Reuben Harvey Prize

Dr Natalie Coyle

The Reuben Harvey Prize is awarded in the Autumn after graduation by the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland to the students in each of the Medical Schools in the Republic of Ireland who achieve the highest marks in their class for final year examinations in Medicine, Surgery and Obstetrics.

Disciplines of GP and PHC Research - AUDGPI 2020 at UCC



AUDGPI
Association of University Departments of General Practice in Ireland

Left to right: Pictured at the AUDGPI in March, Dr Jon Salsberg (Senior Lecturer in Primary Healthcare Research), Dr Vikram Niranjana (Research Assistant), Ms Meghan Guilfoyle (PhD candidate), Dr Raymond O'Connor (Senior Research Fellow, General Practice), Prof Anne MacFarlane (Chair of Primary Healthcare Research).

The disciplines of General Practice and Primary Healthcare Research from the School of Medicine were very well represented at this year's Association of University Department of General Practice (AUDGPI) annual scientific meeting held in University College Cork on 5th and 6th of March 2020.

Presentations were made at the event by Prof Liam Glynn, Prof Ailish Hannigan, Dr Susann Huschke, Dr Mohammed Hussain, Dr Dervla Kelly, Mr Patrick Molloy, Dr Vikram Niranjana, Dr Ray O'Connor and Dr Jon Salsberg.

Prof Anne MacFarlane, Prof Ailish Hannigan and Claire Collins presented a workshop on 'Barriers to the implementation of ethnic identifiers in Irish Primary Care: Exploring solutions'.

BMBS Students Petrus Retief (Year 3) and Darragh Rooney (Year 4) presented on 'The availability of General Practice in Ireland's Mid-West region - does the "inverse care law" still apply?' and data on the 'BIOTOPE study' respectively.

Prof Liam Glynn presented 'Career destinations of graduates from a Medical School with an 18-week longitudinal integrated clerkship in General Practice: a survey of alumni 6 to 8 years after graduation'. Co-authors were Prof Aidan Culhane, Prof Pat O'Dwyer, Ms Monica Casey, Dr Peter Hayes, Dr Mike O'Callaghan, Dr John Cuddihy, Dr Billy O'Connell, Dr Gary Stack, Dr Jerry O'Flynn, Dr Pat O'Donnell, Dr Ray O'Connor, Dr Helena McKeague and Prof Deirdre McGrath.

Prof Ailish Hannigan presented 'Health needs and healthcare access of vulnerable new communities in Ireland: a primary care perspective'. Co-authors were Orla McGarry, Angela Joy, Suzanne

Nolan, Prof Anne MacFarlane and Dr Andrew O'Regan.

Dr Susann Huschke presented 'Barriers to the use of trained interpreters in consultations with refugees in four resettlement countries: A qualitative analysis using Normalisation Process Theory'.

Co-authors were Prof Anne MacFarlane, Prof Kevin Pottie, Prof Fern Hauch, Prof Kim Griswold and Prof Mark Harris.

Dr Mohammed Hussain presented 'Participatory implementation research in the field of migrant health: Sustainable changes and ripple effects over time'. Co-authors were Prof Anne MacFarlane, Prof Maria van den Muijsenbergh, Prof Joseph LeMaster, Parmida Shahiri, M. Brouwer, Prof Chris Dowrick, Dr Maria Papadakai and Prof Christos Lionis.

Dr Dervla Kelly presented 'Discontinuing Antidepressants: Views of General Practitioners in Ireland'.

Mr Patrick Molloy from the UL School of Design presented 'An Iterative co-design process for the development of a novel prototype punch biopsy'. Co-author was Prof Liam Glynn.

Dr Vikram Niranjana presented 2 topics 'Training others starts with training ourselves: Co-designing PPI training' and 'Using informal interactions as a catalyst for meaningful PPI in health research'. Co-authors were Prof Anne MacFarlane, Bernie Woods, Cally Jeffers, Deborah Tannehill, Imelda Doolan, Liam O'Sullivan, Marguerite Clancy, Meghan Guilfoyle, Miriam McCarthy, Stephen Gallagher, Zoe Hughes and Dr Jon Salsberg.

Dr Ray O'Connor presented the following:

1. 'Acute Respiratory Tract Infections

(ARTI) in Out of Hours Primary Care; Study of Patient Preferences and Physicians'. This was the culmination of 2 years of research part funded by the ICGP and involved a literature review, as well as qualitative and quantitative studies. Co-authors included Dr Andrew O'Regan, Ms Jane O'Doherty, Prof Ailish Hannigan and Prof Colum Dunne.

2. 'Qualitative study of the barriers and facilitators to attendance at an exercise based cardiac rehabilitation programme in primary care'. This paper was co-authored with Prof Catherine Woods, Ms Alison Bourke of the department of Physical Exercise and Sports Science (PESS) and Dr. Vikram Niranjana.

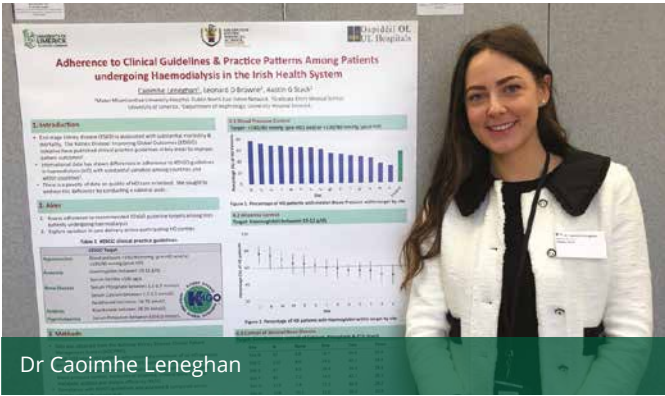
3. 'ULMedEx: Medical exercise can improve functional capacity and frailty in people with chronic morbidity'. This paper was co-authored with Prof Catherine Woods and Mr Morgan Lewis of PESS.

4. 'COPD Management in General Practice in Ireland'. This paper was co-authored with GP registrars from the Mid-West GP training programme based in the Medical School. Other GP trainee presentations were made by Dr Gillian Burke (Hepatitis C audit) and Dr Paul Stassen (disease coding).

Dr Jon Salsberg presented Meghan Guilfoyle's work on 'Evaluating Inter-Organisational Collaboration for Public and Patient Involvement in Health Research'. Co-authors were Prof Anne MacFarlane, Dr Jon Salsberg, Dr Vikram Niranjana, Una McInerney, Margeurite Clancy, Imelda Doolan, Stephen Gallagher, Zoe Hughes, Cally Jeffers, Miriam McCarthy, Liam O'Sullivan and Deborah Tannehill.

Jess Drinkwater presented 'Participatory evaluation of a co-designed intervention to strengthen patient involvement in improving General Practice'. Co-authors were Prof A MacFarlane, D Meads, M Twiddy, R H Chadwick, A Donnelly, P Gleeson, A Hannan, N Hayward, M Kelly, R Mir, G Prestwick, M Rathfelder and R Foy.

UL Kidney Research Consortium



Dr Caoimhe Leneghan

Dr Caoimhe Leneghan, BMBS 2019 graduate, won the “Best Poster Prize” at The National RAMI Intern Study Day 2020 for the first national study on quality of care on Haemodialysis in Ireland; *Assessment of Modifiable Risk Factors and Practice Patterns among Haemodialysis Patients in the Irish Health System*, under the mentorship of Professor Austin Stack.



Professor Austin Stack and Dr Leonard Browne

UL Kidney Research Consortium, under the stewardship of Professor Austin Stack and Dr Leonard Browne have been successful in a new wave of funding from the 2020 HRB Conference and Event Sponsorship Scheme for the following symposium; *A Learning Health Care System: Kidney Disease Surveillance, Outcomes, Policy and Action*. This funding will support a meeting of national and international experts in UL to evaluate how linked health data has the potential to inform the development of policies and actionable strategies for optimal kidney disease care. They will generate hypotheses on potential strategies to slow kidney disease progression through risk factor identification and continuous quality improvement cycles. This symposium will enable expansion of the Kidney Disease Surveillance System across hospital groups and optimal use of national data sets.

Dr Mohamed Elsayed, School of Medicine MD candidate and SpR in Nephrology, published a significant paper on the relative survival benefits of haemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis. The largest metaanalysis ever conducted found that the survival of new patients with kidney failure was similar irrespective of treatment type, PD or in-centre HD and advocate that this new knowledge be incorporated into policy documents to enable patients and their providers make the best decisions on optimal treatments; *Propensity-Score matched mortality comparisons of Peritoneal and In-Centre Haemodialysis. Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis is published in Nephrology, Dialysis and Transplantation and authored by Mohamed E Elsayed, Adam D Morris, Xia X Li, Leonard D Browne LD, and Austin G Stack AG and is available online in Nephrol Dial Transplant. 2020 Jan 25. pii: gfz278. Doi 10.1093/ndt/gfz278. [Epub ahead of print] PubMed PMID: 31981353.*



Dr Mohamed Elsayed



Dr Mark Behan

BMBS 2020 graduate Mark Behan, was awarded a podium presentation at the 57th European Renal Association Meeting Milan for his work on Lithium and the risk of chronic kidney disease. This is a wonderful achievement for Mark in addition to his final graduation as a Doctor. *SO081 Lithium Exposure and Occurrence of Chronic Kidney Disease in the Irish Health System*; a cohort study has been accepted as a Free Communication at the 57th ERA-EDTA Fully Virtual Congress, which was held from June 6th - 9th, 2020.



Professor Austin Stack with the UHL Haemodialysis Team

The Annual Association of Medical Students of Ireland (AMSI) Medical Case Conference 2020



BMBS students pictured with Professors Aidan Culhane and James O'Hare



Prof Aidan Culhane (left) and Prof James O'Hare (right) present the AMSI Annual Perpetual Trophy to the overall winner, BMBS Year 4 student Frances Fallon.

The AMSI Medical Case Competition in the Medical School was very successfully organised by Co-Chairs and BMBS Year 2 students, Sajjad Rezaei and Jessie Bujouves. Students from Year 3 and Year 4 presented fascinating cases from their rotations. The standard was very high from all finalists and the competition provided the students with a fantastic platform to display their knowledge and presentation skills. After much deliberation, Judges Prof James O'Hare and Prof Aidan Culhane awarded the perpetual trophy and prize to Frances Fallon (BMBS Year 4) as the overall winner for her case entitled, *"It's Not all Heart; A Case of Pulseless Electrical Activity"*. The Year 3 prize went to Sabina Strashun for, *"A complex case of Alcoholic Liver disease"*. All of the cases contained unexpected and rich learning points. Students were reminded that the Year 4 SSM (research) encourages high quality case reports like those presented.

Humanities and Arts Prize Winners Year 3 Student Special Study Module (SSM)

The student-selected module in Humanities and Arts encourages students to reflect on a topic in Medicine of special interest to investigate, celebrate or critique. Students may choose visual, written, performing or written media for their communication. They also provide a written reflection explaining the work, what stimulated them, how they developed it, difficulties they encountered how they overcame them and report on the experience. The freedom of the project challenges reflection, creativity and problem solving in what may be a less familiar learning mode. Prizes are awarded in the visual media and the written/performing media. There were many works of high merit and it was challenging to pick the best. Michelle Lepitre and Alex Taylor won joint first prize for visual work with Shane Byrne the other first prize winner for his writing/performance art.

Michelle Lepitre presented, *"ORGANically Woven"*, a meditation on her journey through learning anatomy and executed in crocheting yarn. This is an impressive rendering of the organs of the thorax and abdomen (photo 1). They are crocheted in a variety of patterns and assembled with great skill in 3 dimensions. She overcame many technical challenges demonstrating ingenuity, perseverance and completion - key qualities of good surgeons. This is on display at the main reception in CERC, University Hospital Limerick.



ORGANically Woven, a meditation on learning anatomy, presented in crochet by Michelle Lepitre.



Touch/Kugusa, a mixed media work on the universality of touch, human experience and connectedness in care by Alex Taylor

Alex Taylor presented Touch/Kugusa, a mixed media construct focused on the universality of touch, human experience and connectedness. 742 interconnecting nails and thread, each representing classmates, staff members, family members and patients who contributed to her journey through Medical School, represent the architecture of the central nervous system. The fingerprints (classmates and her own in red) highlight the impact of touch in the care of patients. The work conveys gratitude, connectedness, and awareness of an ancient professional activity.

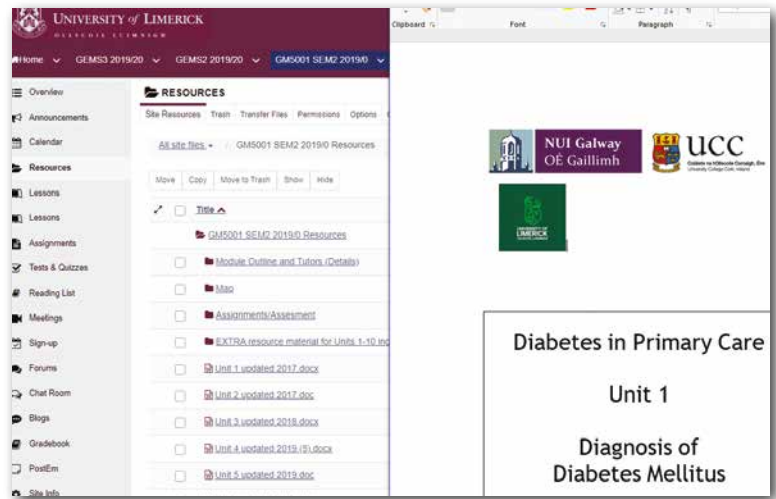
Shane Byrne presented *Musings of a Patient*, a diary-recollection of his experience as a patient several years before his time at the School of Medicine, with a life threatening condition on the receiving end of the medical system. It is interwoven with compassionate commentary from his new perspective as a Doctor in the making. It is authentic, insightful and funny. The commentary by his emerging professional self provides memorable insights into the shortcomings, the unexpected and realities of *the system* and professionals he met. He vows to use the experiences to improve his future practice. The work is an example of personal medical experience driving an engaging narrative and reflection.

Diabetes in Primary Care Module

The newly launched module, "The Management of Diabetes in Primary Care" started in January 2020. This is available as an optional credit in the Advanced Healthcare Practice (MSc) degree, but also as a standalone module for healthcare practitioners who wish to re-boot their skills and knowledge. A team of academic GPs, Consultant Endocrinologists, advanced Nurse Practitioners, GP Practice Nurses and Dietitians, facilitate this course as well as Podiatrists from the Mid-West. Enrolled students were also a heterogeneous bunch of healthcare workers. Onward and upwards.

Together we are stronger.

The module leader Dr Peter Hayes and module administrator Monica Casey are both supported by Professor Liam Glynn.



Diabetes Care in General practice

A landmark paper on the care of patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus in Irish General Practice following the introduction of the 'Cycle of Care' chronic disease management programme, has just been published by the School of Medicine's General Practice researchers. It is the first study to examine the effectiveness of this initiative since its introduction in 2015. The study resulted from a very successful collaboration between the discipline of General Practice at the School of Medicine and the Health Ireland User Group, containing General Practitioners who use the HealthOne clinical software in General Practice in Ireland.

Participating Practices provided data on processes of care. Data on eligible public patients was extracted from



the electronic medical record system, HealthOne software. 41 Practices participated, yielding data from 3146 patients.

There were substantial improvements in the rates of recording of glycosylated haemoglobin, total cholesterol, urinary albumin creatinine ratio, blood pressure and body-mass index. For the first time, rates of retinopathy screening, foot review and influenza immunisation were recorded.

Comparison of 2017 data with UK Audit 2015-16 data was broadly similar. This indicates that within a year of the introduction of adequate resourcing, the standard of care of type 2 diabetes in Irish General Practice was equivalent to that of their UK counterparts. However, in the UK such resourcing has been available for over 20 years.

The authors of the study were Dr Raymond O'Connor, Dr Rory O'Driscoll, Ms Jane O'Doherty, Prof Ailish Hannigan, Ms Aoife O'Neill, Dr Conor Teljeur and Dr Andrew O'Regan.

The paper was published in British Journal of General Practice Open and is available at <https://doi.org/10.3399/bjgpopen20X101021>

Health Equity Group Donation



BMBS Medical Students, who are members of the Health Equity group, pictured with Dr Patrick O'Donnell (Clinical Fellow in General Practice)

The Health Equity Programme (HEP) raised considerable funds last semester for local charitable organisations through a variety of fundraising events hosted for the medical students at UL and the greater community. The HEP executive team donated €500 euros in December last year to the Ana Liffey Drug Project (ALDP) and the Society of St Vincent de Paul. HEP consists of a partnership of BMBS students seeking to foster engagement and raise awareness of health equity in a local Irish and global context through observerships with partner organisations and fundraising events, with aims of improving access to primary healthcare for marginalised groups, including homeless persons, drug users, travellers and migrants. The donations given last December will go towards ALDP's efforts to deliver harm reducing and rehabilitative drug services and the social justice mission of the Society of St Vincent de Paul, to eliminate the causes of poverty. For more information about HEP or to contribute to their mission, visit their website at ulhep.weebly.com or connect with them through Facebook (@ulhep) or Twitter (@ulhealthequity).

BMBS Year 2 Students Fundraising



Congratulations and very well done to BMBS Year 2 students, Cathal Freeman and Gabriela Mineva.

Cathal successfully completed a marathon length run on a patch of grass near his UL student accommodation on Sunday 5th April 2020.

Taking approximately seven and a half hours, Cathal completed 1,400 circuits around a 30-metre course whilst soloing a sliothar. Cathal is raising money for the Irish Cancer Society and the HSE Staff for PPE during this crisis. An initial fundraising target of €20,000 was more than doubled with a current total of over €54,000 raised.

The sponsorship appeal remains open at www.gofundme.com/f/marathon-while-soloing-a-sliothar

You can also see Cathal on RTE news [Here](#).

Gabriela ran over 40 km and raised €500 for the Barnardos Ireland Run a Marathon in April - Covid-19 Crisis Appeal for Children. The money raised will be used to help children who are living with domestic abuse, parental mental health challenges, neglect, family breakdown and addiction who now have no escape because of the lockdown restrictions. Barnardos will use the money raised to help children with their schoolwork including arts and crafts, provide them with healthy meals and guidance on staying safe.



Gabriela Mineva (BMBS Year 2)



Óskar Steindórsson Paramedic Studies. 27th April: Iceland are hoping to see the light at the end on lockdown restrictions, but due to these restrictions, the healthcare system in Iceland was able to cope despite the unbelievable stress.



Peter Studnicka (4th year Paramedic Science) who is undertaking an induction course with the National Ambulance Service in Mayo prior to starting a position there. He is practicing putting on PPE followed by the decontamination process.



BMBS Year 2 students Conor Clancy and Aubree Worobetz contact tracing

Our Covid-19 Story by Year 2 Paramedic student Thomas Powell



Year 2 Paramedic Students Thomas Powell, Michael Downey and Nathan Breen

Our placement started last September, we were keen and ready for action and between the three of us, we had a variety of calls. As the weeks went on, our knowledge and confidence grew. We soon heard that the virus had arrived in the UK and as a student you learn about pandemics thinking to ourselves in class about when are we ever going to use that word. Little did we know that a year later we would be in the eye of the storm. From our normal emergency calls, possible and confirmed Covid-19 cases became more prominent in our daily duties including an increasing awareness of the amount of PPE we had stored in the ambulance, to give us full protection to carry out our duties. During all our calls, we had to wear masks and gowns, which provided us with twelve hours of sore noses and sore chins. We also had to clean down our ambulances daily. On one particular day whilst on shift, all calls were confirmed as possible Covid-19 cases. Whilst listening to patient stories was horrifying, families being reunited with loved ones was a heart-warming sight. We are now nine months into our placement and all three of us were off work with Covid-19 symptoms. Listening to the news around the world about healthcare workers being hospitalised, it is a frightening reality of what we were facing. Our colleagues swabbed us at our doorway but thankfully, the results came back negative!