



## WONCA World Rural Health Conference June 2022

Despite the challenges of Covid-19, Monkeypox and the war in Ukraine, over 650 delegates from over 40 countries arrived at the University of Limerick for the WONCA World Rural Health Conference, June 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>, hosted by the discipline of General Practice from the UL School of Medicine.

"We believe passionately that by people coming together and working together and sharing ideas, we can change attitudes, lives, health and ultimately, the world," commented Professor Liam Glynn, Chair of the organising committee in advance of the conference. This was the first ever hosting of this international conference on Irish soil and it did indeed provide a unique crossroads for a diverse community of GPs, practice nurses, students, researchers, policy makers, health managers, creators and educators to come together and explore the conference theme of, 'Improving Health, Empowering Communities'.

This and many other sub-themes were debated at the conference and resulted in a Limerick Declaration on Rural Healthcare being endorsed by conference delegates, a road map for creating sustainable healthcare in rural communities on this island and beyond.

Professor Liam Glynn and UL President Prof Kerstin Mey opened the conference, after a stirring performance from the Clew Bay Bagpipers. Our 14 inspirational keynote speakers and global thought leaders sparked the conference to life.

This action-oriented conference fostered a high level of meaningful dialogue and cooperation amongst stakeholders, asserted Dr John Wynn-Jones, a renowned Global GP leader who Chaired the Conference International Advisory Group. Members of the group came from every corner of the world, ensuring the conference had a truly international flavour.

A key outcome of this conference was an enhanced understanding of and commitment to student and early-career healthcare professionals who are



Opening Ceremony of the WONCA Rural Health Conference

interested in living and working in rural areas. "If young Doctors and nurses are not supported to have vibrant and viable careers in rural areas, those same areas will become even more vulnerable. This is a critical issue for those communities and this conference provided a unique opportunity for stakeholders, leaders and international experts to find solutions," said Dr Robert Scully, Deputy Director of ScotGEM and co-Chair of the student and young Doctor sub-committee for the conference.

The "Rural Seeds", World Rural Doctors in Training network comprising largely of students and young Doctors with an interest in rural medicine, who collaborate closely with experienced Doctors and other health professionals were represented at the conference. The aim of Rural Seeds is to be a worldwide network that raises awareness and improves the guidance in training for rural Practice for people in the early stages of their career development.

Funding was provided to bring three "Rural Seeds" student ambassadors to Ireland in advance of the conference, where they had a chance to experience rural General Practice in Ireland and then report on their experiences at the conference. In addition, bursary funding was provided to ensure that over 50 students were able to attend and present at the conference, a wonderful conference legacy particularly as the discipline of General Practice in the School of Medicine, will from 1<sup>st</sup> September this year, host the first ever Irish Rural General Practice fellowship.

Funding was also provided to host 5

Ukrainian war refugee Doctors at the conference and a wonderful Ukrainian choir from Ennistymon in County Clare, who came to partake in the social and cultural programme. This was a truly wonderful conference, especially after a period of global isolation, in which people could come together to meet old friends and colleagues and to make new ones and most of all, to learn about and from each other.

This conference could not have taken place without the hard work of many people and many committees. Prof Glynn would like to thank them all, but specifically the School of Medicine staff and students, who played such key roles in the success of this event, including our Head of School Professor Deirdre McGrath, for her unwavering support and conference address. The incredible administration team, Monica Casey, Kevin O'Connor, Josephine Lynch and Sharon Nolan who left no stone unturned. Our professional conference organising team from PCC, Deborah Tudge, Megan Tuite and Alan Sheedy. Dr Peter Hayes, our scientific committee Chair, Dr Patrick O'Donnell, our student committee co-Chair, who along with Brad Williams and Alexandra Ferrara led student involvement at the conference. Dr Andrew O'Regan our CLIC Symposium Chair and all our students who volunteered or attended and contributed to an outstanding atmosphere of collegiality, innovation and most importantly great hope for the future. The award for winning tweet for the conference was "Happiness All Round" and that really says it all!

## WONCA 2022, Limerick: A place to Meet Friends and Share Stories.

By Dr Pat Harrold

The poet Spencer called the river “The spacious Shannon spreading like a sea” and while it is not quite as broad as all that, but where it flows through the parkland setting of the University of Limerick, under the widest footbridge in Europe and on past the idyllically set School of Medicine, it is wide enough to impress and adds to the energy of a college where Limerick meets Clare. A great river is a confluence of many tributaries and the WONCA World Rural Health Conference 2022 has been a coming together of three main groups: University of Limerick School of Medicine, Rural Island and Dispensing Doctors’ organisation and The Irish College of General Practitioners all united at the University of Limerick from 17th to 20th June. WONCA is the global family Doctor organisation, and its conferences are inspirational meetings of minds, awash with enthusiasm and ideas. After two years of communicating through technology, it is especially exciting to have met face to face, to meet friends and made new ones, to have learned and gotten a mighty shot of motivation.

Any WONCA conference is good for us, for our Practices and patients and this one was on a global scale. The School of Medicine is a centre for primary care research and education, with a strong emphasis on General Practice as students spend 25% of their clinical training there. Over the past 15 years, it has given local GPs a chance to be part of a greater whole. These students and young Doctors are the future of medicine and it is a privilege to be involved.

This conference was held in conjunction with the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) AGM. When the country closed down, the ICGP stepped forward and took its place as an essential and crucial leader in the community healthcare response to the Covid-19 pandemic. As the rules changed with bewildering speed, the ICGP led the way by keeping the GPs, their patients and their families safe.

Every family Doctor in Ireland is aware of the nationwide small group learning network (CME), the hidden University spreading knowledge and collegiality throughout Ireland. Dr Stephanie Dowling, keynote speaker and a CME tutor team showcased CME small group learning, presenting new research, workshopping and demonstrating how the network has become the most important educational resource in Irish General Practice. The inspirational work of the late Michael Boland, who founded continuing medical education all those years ago in west Cork and saw it expand nationally and internationally, is still remembered as a former President of WONCA.

Our friends in the Irish World Academy, next door to the music academy, helped out with dancing lessons, performance and a righteous Céilí. The poetry workshop, in association with the UL Creative Writing Department, yoga in the mornings, a specially arranged demonstration hurling match and the Olympic standard sporting facilities added to the experience. For golfers there was the Dr Paddy Cosgrove Cup competition. On the Sunday, there was a special Japanese nature meditation walk - the art of Shinrin Yoku, with Dr Helena Uy, Junko Oda and Sean O'Connor in the campus forest. Crown Beoir, the conference exhibition, focused on Traveller women and girls and the subject of how hair is intrinsically linked to their identity. ‘The Silver Branch’, a beautiful documentary featuring Burren farmer Patrick McCormack, was shown throughout the conference. What an incredibly uplifting experience this has been for all who attended and it has certainly put the School of Medicine and the discipline of General Practice at the University of Limerick on a global stage. Bravo to all involved!

Dr Pat Harrold is a GP who works in Nenagh and an Adjunct Senior Clinical Lecturer at the UL School of Medicine. He has been an Irish College of General Practitioners Continuing Medical Education (CME) tutor for 16 years.

## Adjunct Associate Clinical Professor Nuala O’Connell, Consultant Microbiologist, Health Services Executive



Associate Prof Nuala O’Connell

Nuala graduated in Biochemistry and Medicine from the National University of Ireland Galway in 1991 and 1994 respectively. She completed an MSc. in Clinical Microbiology at the Queen Mary University of London in 1997 before becoming a Registrar at the Beaumont Hospital, Dublin and a Lecturer in Clinical Microbiology at the Royal College of Surgeons Ireland. Nuala

finished her Clinical Microbiology training by undertaking a PHLS/HPA rotation in the West Midlands, UK, at which time she was awarded an MD from the University of Warwick in 2003, for her thesis on *Clostridium difficile* in a biofilm mode of growth using the Sobarod filter system. Nuala passed her MRCPATH in Clinical Microbiology in 2004 and has been a Consultant Microbiologist and Infection Prevention and Control Doctor, at University Hospital Limerick since 2005. She is also an Adjunct Associate Clinical Professor at the UL School of Medicine. Her interests include prosthetic joint infections, biofilms and antimicrobial resistance.

Publication details are at <https://www.scopus.com/authid/detail.uri?authorId=7006123522>

## Professor Aedin Culhane



Professor Aedin Culhane is Professor of Cancer Genomics and new director of the recently launched Limerick Digital Cancer Research Center at the University of Limerick. She has over 20 years’ experience in cancer genomics and clinical cancer research, of which over 15 years were in the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Harvard TH Chan School

of Public Health in Boston, USA. Aedin is a member of the Human Cell Atlas project and her group are developing methods for integrative analysis of single cell molecular data to inform precision oncology. She is a member of the Observational Health Data Sciences and Informatics project that is developing open-source tools to use real world data to inform clinical research. Aedin is an advocate for open-source science and was recently recognised for her leadership in the Bioconductor, an open-source genomics software in R that is used by over 800,000 researchers worldwide. We welcome Aedin to the School of Medicine and look forward to collaborating on her innovative work.

## Public Health Practicum 2022

**By Dr Niamh Cummins on behalf of the Masters of Science in Public Health (MScPH) Faculty Team**

The MScPH at the UL School of Medicine is a young and innovative programme, which was designed in collaboration with health service partners and multidisciplinary stakeholders.

The MScPH Practicum is an experiential learning placement, which allows our students to build competencies in public health, while also providing service to a partner organisation in the public health community. Students have the opportunity to work on a public health project in a real-world setting, while being mentored by experienced professionals in the field.

The Practicum Module is coordinated by Dr Niamh Cummins (Lecturer in Public Health) who has expanded the MScPH network of partner organisations regionally, nationally and internationally, to facilitate placements for our 47 MScPH students.

Our students undertook the 2022 Practicum from March - May 2022 and worked with their partner organisations on diverse projects in health protection, health improvement, health services improvement and health intelligence. The MScPH team would gratefully like

to acknowledge the support of all their partner organisations during the 2022 Practicum.

**Regional Partners:** Access Office UL; Clinical Research Support Unit, Health Research Institute, UL; Emergency Department, University Hospital Limerick; Health Sciences Academy; Healthy Limerick; HSE St. Camillus; Limerick City Fire & Rescue; Mid-West Community Healthcare; Physical Activity for Health UL; HSE Public Health Mid-West; School of Medicine UL; Social Connexions, Technological University of the Shannon; St. John's Hospital.

**National Partners:** Athletics Ireland; COPE, Galway; Doras; Emergency Department, Wexford General Hospital; Institute of Public Health; Irish Defence Forces Medical Corps; National Ambulance Service; Roscommon Hospital; Specsavers, Cork; UCD Veterinary Public Health.

**International Partners:** Beyond Stigma; GOAL; HSE Global Health; KNCV Tuberculosis Foundation; Monash University; The Network Towards Unity for Health (TUFH), Universidad Icesi, Colombia; Victoria University, Australia; Women and Health Together for the Future (WHTF); World Federation of Public Health Associations.

## A World First International Consensus On Aquatic Therapy For Parkinson's Disease



UL is leading the way in Parkinson's disease research with the development of new international aquatic therapy guidelines for this illness. The guidelines represent a world first in achieving international consensus on the evidence-based application of aquatic therapy in the treatment of Parkinson's disease.

Louise Carroll (School of Allied Health) conducted the research behind the guidelines as part of her doctoral studies, under the supervision of Prof Amanda Clifford (School of Allied Health) and with co-supervisors, Prof William O'Connor (School of Medicine) and Prof Meg Morris (La Trobe University Melbourne). This included an international collaboration with Dr Daniele Volpe (Fresco Parkinson Institute Centre of Excellence, Italy), who alongside Dr Jon Salsberg (School of Medicine), provided expertise for the aquatic therapy and patient and public involvement component of the study.

Aquatic therapy involves water immersion as an exercise and rehabilitation medium to improve physical capacity and psychosocial wellbeing of those living with Parkinson's disease

In another innovation the guidelines were published in the Journal of Parkinson's Disease as a two-page guideline infographic specifically designed for easy dissemination via social media platforms. This infographic provides an internationally agreed practical systematic guide to clinicians in implementing an effective therapy programme tailored to individual patient needs.



Emmett Byrne and Majesty Alukagberie in the "War-Room" at Covid headquarters for the National Ambulance Service, with Practicum Supervisor and Covid response lead, Richard Quinlan.



Andres Lopez Castro interviewing a new mother about local midwifery services during a field trip on his Practicum with Universidad Icesi, Colombia.



Esther Atuhaire was successful in securing a competitive internship position at the Institute of Public Health for her Practicum investigating women's mental health.



Loveth Nwanze and Sandra Nantumbwe conducted research projects with their partner organisations and attended the Health Research Institute (HRI) Research Day during the Practicum Module.

## Annual Health Service Executive (HSE) Open Access Awards



On 22nd December 2021, University of Limerick School of Medicine researchers were recipients of two prizes of the six prizes in the annual Health Service Executive (HSE) Open Access Awards (<https://www.lenus.ie/hse/>).

In 2021, the Awards aimed to celebrate research performed and published while "Emerging from the Shadow of Covid-19".

Highlighting these Awards, the HSE stated that, "This year has seen the Irish health services deal with a number of unprecedented challenges, from the massive cyber-attack in May to the rollout of the largest vaccination programme in the country's history.

Through it all, clinicians and researchers have continued to deliver high quality healthcare – and to research new treatments, new advances in science and health, new ways of improving health outcomes.

The HSE Open Access Research Awards aims to shine a light on this activity and to thank those who have chosen to make their work available through Open Access, making their discoveries and advances freely available to all".

Winner in the Acute Care and Hospitals category - Professor Colum Dunne (Foundation Chair of Research), for work performed with colleagues in the field of delirium. The Comprehensive Systematic Review of Biomarkers in Delirium was published in the Journal of Psychosomatic Research. DOI:10.1016/j.jpsychores.2021.110530. The paper can be accessed: [Here](#)

Winner in the Special Merit category - Professor Gautam Gulati (Adjunct Associate Clinical Professor), for work performed with colleagues in the School of Medicine and the School of Law related to Intellectual Disability. DOI:10.1016/j.ijlp.2021.101683. The article can be accessed here: [Here](#)



## Mary Whelehan



The School of Medicine would like to thank Mary Whelehan, senior administrator in Portiuncula Hospital, Ballinalsoe for her work and commitment over the last 12 years. Mary joined the School of Medicine (then GEMS) in May 2010 to welcome the first GEMS students to Portiuncula for AY10-11. Since then, Mary has been the welcoming friendly face and the 'Mammy away from home' for over 400 BMBS students. Mary will be greatly missed by staff and students, particularly those in Portiuncula. We wish Mary all the very best in her retirement.

## Social Accountability in Health Professions Education

On Friday the 14<sup>th</sup> of January the School of Medicine hosted its first virtual seminar on Social Accountability in Health Professions Education. The seminar was opened by Head of School Prof Deirdre McGrath and Ms Maria Bridgeman, Mid-West Community Healthcare Chief Officer, provided the seminar's closing remarks. It was a great success with esteemed speakers, including Prof Robert Wollard (Co-Chair Taskforce on Social Accountability and Accreditation), The Network-TUFH, Dr Charles Boelen (International Consultant in Health System and Personnel) and Mr Nick Torres (Executive Director, The Network-TUFH) and over 100 attendees from all corners of the globe. We would like to thank all who participated and attended our event, we hope it will be the one of many.

### Educational Strategies

From COME and CBE to Service Learning



Authentic Learning Approach



Inter-professional training



## Professor Anne MacFarlane - Plenary Session of the WHO European Region



Professor Anne MacFarlane (Professor of Primary Healthcare Research, School of Medicine)

Professor Anne MacFarlane was invited to speak at a plenary session of the World Health Organisation (WHO) European Region, a high-level meeting on health and migration, March 17th 2022. Professor MacFarlane was representing the Region's network of migrant health Collaborating Centres.

The participation provided an opportunity to summarise research findings from her national and international research programme about the importance of trained interpreters in healthcare consultations for Ministries of Health from the 53 member states. The relevance of the issue was very clear and poignant at this time given the crises in Ukraine and the rising numbers of refugees displaced in Europe because of the conflict.

## Diagnostic Technology for Covid-19 Detection in Hospital Settings



In January 2022, Professor Colum Dunne, School of Medicine (Foundation Chair and Director of Research), presented to a global audience of more than 1,400 clinicians and scientists focused on diagnostic technology for COVID19 detection in hospital settings. This webinar, organised by multinational company Abbott, was based on published Dunne et al research performed in UL/UHL. Point of Care Testing (POCT) was used in the Emergency Department to identify patients with respiratory viruses before they entered the general admitted patient population. This testing successfully reduced risk of infected patients transmitting their virus to other patients and to staff.

## Origin of Ethnic Diversity Forum (EDF) in **UL** and School of Medicine



Left to right: Chelsea Joyce (EDF events and media co-ordinator), Dr Yoga Nathan (Senior Lecturer in Medical Education and Chair of EDF, UL), Andrew Rosa (BMBS Year 1), Professor Kerstin Mey (UL President)

With the establishment of the office of the Director of Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in March 2021, a mapping exercise commenced to capture the broad range of HR-EDI activities being undertaken across the institution, to align these activities to the overall institution HR-EDI Strategy and to identify gaps. In September 2021, the Ethnic Diversity Forum was established as a subgroup of the HR-EDI Steering Committee (Pillar 3 – Diversity & Inclusion) and Dr Yoga Nathan from the School of Medicine was selected as the Chair of this committee to ensure that the lived experiences and the voices of the ethnic groups in UL are represented.

EDF was formed and launched in the first semester of the 2021-2022 academic year and introduced a logo design competition, open to all students and staff in UL. The prizes for the competition were vouchers for different ethnic dinners in Limerick City and among the winners were two first year BMBS students; Andrew Rosa won First prize and the third prize winner was Saloni Pandya.

UL President Kerstin Mey, who launched the EDF Logo competition during the UL50 in the Plaza Ceremony, also launched EDF in December 2021.

## 2022 Irish Intervarsity Swimming Championships



Left to right: Madeline Stever (Female Captain of the UL Swimming Club), Kaitlyn Lee, Esme Kittle, Victoria Giglio and Ben Nevill

There were several athletic accomplishments for five UL School of Medicine students in March.

BMBS Year 1 students, Victoria Giglio, Esme Kittle, Kaitlyn Lee, and BMBS Year 4 students Ben Nevill and Madeline Stever represented UL at the Irish Intervarsity Swimming Championships. This is an annual competition between all the Universities and Colleges in Ireland and Northern Ireland. During the 2-day competition, these athletes performed at an exceptional level.

Victoria started the competition for the UL team by winning the first bronze medal in the 200m backstroke. She followed this up with a gold medal in the 100m butterfly and was a member of the bronze medal winning relay team in the female medley relay.

At her first intervarsity competition, Esme finished 29<sup>th</sup> in the 50m butterfly and 19<sup>th</sup> in the 100m backstroke.

Kaitlyn won a bronze medal in the 50m butterfly and qualified for the final heats in the 100m backstroke, finishing in 11<sup>th</sup> place.

Ben qualified for the final heats finishing in 10<sup>th</sup> place for the 100m Individual medley and finished in 12<sup>th</sup> place in the 50m breaststroke.

Madeline won gold in the 200m backstroke, holding her undefeated title (4 years in a row). She also won silver in the 100m breaststroke and bronze as a member of the relay team in the female medley relay.

Overall, the success of these swimmers outside of the classroom and clinical placement is a true testament to their hard work and dedication to the sport on a daily basis. The School appreciates the magnitude of such a competition and the successes of these medical students at national level.

## Paediatric Medicine Seminar

On 27<sup>th</sup> April, the UL Department of Paediatrics hosted a talk by Professor Sir Terence Stephenson on the subject of long Covid in children and young people. Professor Stephenson, is the Nuffield Professor of Child Health at the Great Ormond Street Institute of Child Health, University College London and Co-Director of the nationally-funded Children's Policy Research Unit. He is also Chair of the Health Research Authority for England. He was knighted in the 2018 New Year Honours for services to healthcare and children's health services and has previously served as Chair of the UK GMC, Chair of the UK Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and President of the UK Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health. He is the lead investigator of the CLOcK Consortium, a research group conducting a large scale cohort study exploring the presentation, phenotype and prevalence of long Covid in young people across England.

Professor Stephenson was visiting Limerick in his capacity of external



Left to right – Dr Siobhan Neville (Senior Lecturer in Paediatrics), Professor Clodagh O’Gorman (Foundation Chair & Professor of Paediatrics) and Professor Sir Terence Stephenson (Professor of Child Health, Great Ormond Street Institute of Child Health, London)

examiner for the BMBS final year examinations in Paediatrics. His talk took place in the Clinical Education and Research Centre and was well-attended by Paediatric consultants, trainees and health and social care professionals. The talk was also broadcast live to attendees across the country, including many other clinical examiners. The event was approved for CPD from the Royal College of Physicians, Ireland.

## Community Interpreting Research Conference



Dr Théophile Munyangeyo and Professor Anne MacFarlane

Munyangeyo (Deputy Director of the Trinity Centre for Global Intercultural Communications, TCD). His presentation focused on, "Interpreter-mediated communicative modalities in emotionally charged situations and contexts", such as asylum seekers or political refugees.

There were further presentations about interpreting in primary care (Professor Anne MacFarlane) and sign language interpreting projects focused on empowering people who suffer domestic, sexual and gender-based violence who need interpreter mediated interconnections (Professor Lorraine Leeson, TCD).

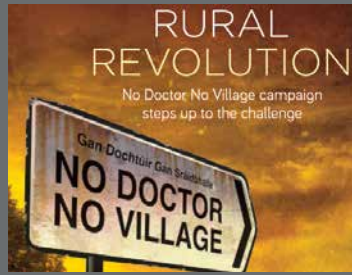
The annual Community Interpreting Research Conference was organised by the Public and Patient Involvement research unit, UL School of Medicine on the 13<sup>th</sup> March 2022 and Chaired by Professor Anne MacFarlane (Professor of Primary Healthcare Research, UL School of Medicine).

The keynote speaker was Dr Théophile

Other presentations referred to legal issues related to the use of untrained interpreters in Irish medical and legal settings (Maria de Almeida Silva, NUI Galway), Dr Mary Phelan and Eddie Lopez Pelen (Dublin City University). Various challenges were highlighted by the presenters and by the audience, as well as some possible solutions to this structural problem.

## First Ever Fellowship in Irish Rural General Practice

Nearly half of the world's population live in rural areas. An estimated 2 billion people living in these areas do not have adequate access to essential health services, which adversely affects health outcomes. An estimated 1 billion people will never encounter any form of health worker during their entire lives and securing equitable access to health services for rural and remote populations continues to be a challenge for Governments and policymakers around the world. At the core of this complex challenge, is a global shortage of well trained, skilled and motivated health workers.



That is the rationale proposed by Professor Liam Glynn in his recent successful application for the first ever Fellowship in Rural General Practice which has been funded by the National Doctors Training and Planning. Commencing in July 2022, this recent graduate from GP training will be based in the School of Medicine, supervised by Professor Liam Glynn, advocate for Rural Healthcare services and co-founder of the "No Doctor No Village" advocacy campaign.

This 1-2 year post training Fellowship will be split between clinical practice (0.5 FTE) and research & education activities (0.5 FTE). The GP Fellow will experience a combination of clinical exposure and training in practices committed to providing high quality care in rural communities. The Fellow will also experience an opportunity for personal and academic development and research through placement in a vibrant research active discipline of General Practice at the School of Medicine. The structured exposure to both

experienced frontline clinicians and a supportive academic environment with clearly demarcated protected time for learning and development, will ensure that the learning and personal development of the Fellow will be prioritised.

"It is crucial that issues of density and distribution of health workers are addressed in order to attain better health outcomes for rural communities. There are also

opportunities for health systems to contribute to sustainable and inclusive economic development in rural and remote areas. Investment in a transformed health workforce has the potential to promote greater economic stability and security. Such investment can play a transformative role in expanding and financing decent work opportunities for women and youths in rural and remote areas, who are often among society's most vulnerable," asserts Prof Glynn.

The Fellow will have the opportunity to obtain advanced skills to meet the challenges of working as a Rural Generalist. The enhanced skills obtained will derive from the curriculum of the established Rural Generalist training schemes and will be discussed with the Fellow to identify a personalised professional development plan prior to commencing the Fellowship. Acquisition of these skills will provide an initial core of advanced skills on which the Fellow can build upon during their continued development as a Rural Generalist. These advanced skills will also help inform the research objectives of the Fellowship, providing a basis on which to build a core curriculum of advanced skills for Rural Generalists in the Irish setting.

## Paediatric Emergency Medicine Study Day



Pictured: Prof Deirdre McGrath (Head of School, School of Medicine), Prof Clodagh O'Gorman (Foundation Chair & Professor of Paediatrics, School of Medicine), Dr Siobhán Gallagher (Consultant Paediatrician, UHL and CHO 3 Disability Services; Clinical Director, Maternal and Child Health Directorate, UL Hospitals Group), Dr Siobhán Neville (Senior Lecturer in Paediatrics, School of Medicine; Consultant General Paediatrician, UHL), Dr Laura Melody (Consultant in Paediatric Emergency Medicine, Children's Health Ireland, Crumlin), Ms Brigitta Joyce (Community Liaison Nurse, Emergency Department, Children's Health Ireland, Temple Street), Ms Emer Coyne (Senior Social Work Practitioner, Children's Health Ireland, Crumlin), Ms Fiona Lyons (Senior Social Work Practitioner, Children's Health Ireland, Crumlin), Dr Michael Barrett (Consultant in Paediatric Emergency Medicine, Children's Health Ireland; UCD Associate Clinical Professor, Women's & Children's Health, UCD School of Medicine).

The Paediatric team at the UL School of Medicine and University Hospital Limerick hosted a Paediatric Emergency Medicine Study Day on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> May. This interdisciplinary event was open to all healthcare professionals and students throughout the hospital group, the University and beyond. More than 70 attendees joined the hybrid event, logging on remotely or joining in person in the Clinical Education and Research Centre (CERC). The event was approved for CPD from the RCPI.

The Study Day was opened by Prof Deirdre McGrath, Head of School and closing remarks were provided by Ms Margaret Gleeson, Chief Director of Nursing and Midwifery at ULHG, on behalf of the UL Hospital Group CEO, Prof Colette Cowan.

Topics included Paediatric trauma in Ireland, multidisciplinary care in the Emergency Department and safe sedation in Paediatrics. As part of the day's events, Dr Michael Barrett and Dr Laura Melody were invited to deliver weekly UHL Grand Rounds. The title of their joint presentation was, 'Paediatric Emergency Medicine: Adding Value to Paediatric Care'.

## BMBS June 2022 Graduations



Congratulations to our newest 131 Graduates from the UL School of Medicine's Bachelor of Medicine Bachelor of Surgery Class of 2022, on the occasion of graduating from their BMBS Programme.

Please follow this [click Here](#) to view the full conferring ceremony

## Graduating Class of 2022 Student Medal and Prize Winners



Left to right: Ciaran Kennedy, Katie Togher, Nicola Cleary, Debola Shomoye, Una Brennan, Ruth Power, Dana Pearl

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

**First Prize in the Discipline of Medicine** Nicola Cleary

**First Prize in the Discipline of Surgery** Una Brennan

**First Prize in Professional Competencies** Ciaran Kennedy

**First Prize in the Discipline of Paediatrics** Ruth Power

**First Prize in the Discipline of Obstetrics and Gynaecology** Dana Pearl

**First Prize in the Discipline of Psychiatry** Una Brennan

**First Prize in the Discipline of General Practice/Primary Care** Debola Shomoye

**Niall O'Higgins Medal** Katie Togher

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.

## "Better Data, Better Planning" in the Emergency Department (ED):

### Evidence-based solutions to ED Crowding and the "Trolley Crisis"

Dr Niamh Cummins (Public Health, School of Medicine) and Prof Rose Galvin (Physiotherapy, School of Allied Health) have investigated overcrowding in emergency departments, the most complex of health services challenges, in the *"Better Data, Better Planning Study"*. The study was a multi-centre, cross-sectional study of EDs in Ireland which took place throughout 2020. The objective of the study is to provide evidence-based solutions to ED crowding, through the provision of standardised data and the identification of drivers of ED presentations from the patient perspective. The study also provides an insight into the impact of Covid-19 on the ED in University Hospital Limerick (UHL).

The results illustrate the importance of addressing capacity and flow in the wider hospital and within community services. Dr Niamh Cummins concluded that, "Covid-19 may have served to highlight the fact that the solutions to ED crowding lie largely outside of the ED. Sustainable system-wide solutions are required to tackle ED crowding which if not addressed will remain a significant public health issue far beyond the pandemic."

