

Health Sciences Academy

2023

Annual REPORT

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Foreword

As UL Hospitals Group Chief Academic Officer and Vice Dean of Health Sciences at UL, it gives me great pleasure to introduce the 2023 Health Science Academy Midwest annual report along with my colleague Miriam McCarthy.

The role of the Health Science Academy within the UL Hospitals Group became more defined this year, as my colleagues and I in the Chief Academic Officers group continued to promote the concept of a Academic Health Sciences System (AHSS) for Irish healthcare. This was underlined by a very successful national meeting on the subject at Farmleigh House last May. An AHSS can exist within any form of healthcare system that gives priority to the role of education, training, research and innovation (ETRI) alongside caring for the patient. A work culture that emphasises and facilitates teaching, training and innovation among all its health sciences staff helps to create better job satisfaction and staff retention while improving output in terms of research, innovation and overall performance, thus ensuring better delivery of evidence based medicine to all patients. This is what the Health Science Academy wants to achieve in the UL Hospitals Group and now in the larger Midwest Health region.

This report shows the great work that is being done to strengthen all aspects of ETRI in both the hospital group and the community health organisation, as well as in the population at large. The Academy team led by Miriam McCarthy has done remarkable work supporting both myself and Dr John McManus, who as clinical training lead, has made huge progress in ensuring that clinical training is of the highest quality. The report outlines UHL's success in attaining HRB grants for the first time, led locally by UHL academic clinicians working closely with scientists in UL. It also describes success arising from close cooperation between our community health organisation and UL researchers, and the many successes of the Junior Health Science Academy and the Equality and Inclusion group.

The highlight of the year was undoubtedly our own academic meeting in December entitled "The Power of Collaboration: building an AHSS in the Midwest". Bringing our two Limerick University Presidents together with our hospital, community and public health leaders and getting everyone's commitment to pursue the academic agenda alongside excellence in healthcare delivery augurs well for the future of an academic based healthcare system in the Midwest. It has been my great privilege to work with this great team in the Academy that has got stronger and stronger over the last four years. As I leave the group I would urge all health professionals in Midwest healthcare alongside our University based health scientists to continue to support the Health Science Academy going forward. You have the potential to develop an academic health system for the Midwest region that I believe will bring huge benefits to its population.



Professor Paul Burke
Chief Academic Office and Vice Dean Health Sciences

Message from Health Sciences Academy Manager

We are delighted to publish our 2023 Annual Report. As we look back on 2023, we can clearly see the impact and value of the collaborations between healthcare and education organisations and institutions in the Midwest including UL Hospitals Group, Midwest Community Healthcare, Public Health MW, University of Limerick, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, Limerick Education and Support Centre, National CAO Forum, National Doctors Training and Planning, Royal College of Physicians, HSE Spark and many others.

The heart of an academic health sciences system-way of working is a fully coordinated partnership between university and healthcare organisations, resulting in better patient care and outcomes, increased community engagement, and greater staff opportunities for education, training, research and innovation. This annual report showcases the work of the variety of projects being led by the Health Sciences Academy. Importantly, it also highlights projects where the Health Sciences Academy is a partner and enabler, with the aim of showcasing the positive impact of collaboration, interorganisational working and networks.

In a year that saw continued pressures on our health system, from addressing waiting lists to navigating the aftermath of the pandemic, our staff and students have shown extraordinary commitment. Their efforts have not only positively impacted patient care but also pushed the boundaries of research, innovation and education in alignment with strategic priorities.

December 2023 marked the retirement of Prof Paul Burke, Chief Academic Officer, after 30 years of dedicated service in the Midwest. Under his executive leadership, the Health Sciences Academy achieved consistent growth and stability, while the concept of integrated, collaborative, and interorganisational work evolved into definitive projects with measurable impact. Paul played a crucial role in guiding the development of academic health sciences systems both locally and nationally. His expertise and mentorship have been invaluable to the team and myself. We extend our sincere gratitude to Paul for his contributions and wish him well in his retirement.



Miriam McCarthy

Health Sciences Academy Manager

Health Sciences Academy team

A healthcare environment and service that supports and values education, training, innovation and research is foundational to the provision of high quality and cost-effective patient care.



Professor Paul Burke
Chief Academic Officer/Vice Dean
(Health Sciences) ULHG/UL



Miriam McCarthy
Health Sciences Academy
Manager



Dr John Mc Manus
NDTP Training Lead &
Consultant Physician



Mary O'Kelly
CERC Building Manager



Dr Sarah Carroll
Senior Technical Officer in
Simulation



Dr Eimear Keane
Research & Development
Office Manager



Verity Hayes
NDTP/HSA Coordinator



Laura Ginty
PA to Chief Academic Officer



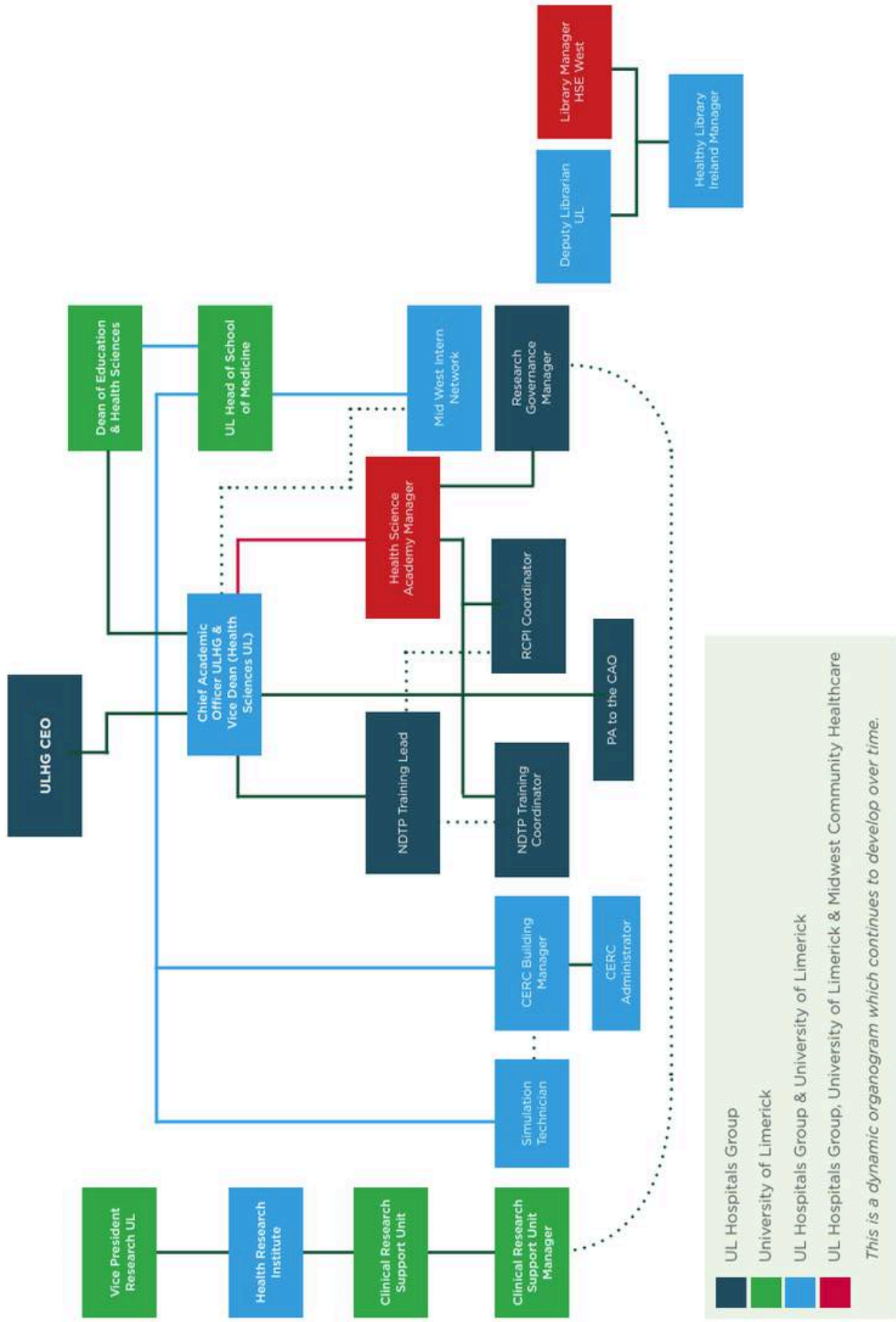
Mairead Debrun
NDTP/HSA Coordinator



Dovile Lee
RCPI Coordinator



Organogram



Strategic Planning and Governance

Strategy and Planning

Developing a strategy for the Health Sciences Academy and an academic health sciences system is a highly collaborative process. Facilitated by the UL Hospitals Group Head of Strategy and Transformation, a workshop was held with stakeholders from across University of Limerick, UL Hospitals Group, Midwest Community Healthcare and Public Health Midwest. These contributions led to the development of a draft strategy for the region with five key pillars identified:

- Establishing an Academic Health Sciences System (AHSS) in the Midwest region
- Excellence in Inter-Professional, Evidence-based Practice
- Enabling Learning and Professional Development
- Research Excellence and Innovation
- Sustainability and Social Responsibility in Healthcare Education and Research

These themes are in alignment with key strategies locally and nationally including UL@50, UL Hospitals Group and Slaintecare as well as the HSE Slaintecare Implementation Plan 2024.

In Autumn 2023, UL Hospitals Group launched their five-year strategy 2023-2028, with an Academic Health Sciences System one of the four identified priorities. The Health Sciences Academy is building the architecture to support an academic health sciences system, supporting organisations and staff to have the agility and ability to implement this strategy.

Through a range of steering committees, development committees and project teams, all with inter-organisational representation, projects are developed and delivered in line with the key themes of the UL Hospitals Group/University of Limerick Memorandum of Understanding to establish a Health Sciences Academy. A MWCH-HSA Development Committee helps guide projects that align to the concept of an AHSS in the community setting.

The Academic Health Sciences System (AHSS) initiative has gained significant traction. A high-level strategy session with key HSA stakeholders convened in early 2023, marking the commencement of a comprehensive Health Sciences Academy strategic review of work to date and future plans. This was followed by an executive planning meeting on May 9, expertly facilitated by the Head of Strategy and Transformation in ULHG, which brought together 25 senior leaders from ULHG, MWCH, and UL.

The meeting proved highly productive, resulting in the identification of four strategic pillars, each underpinned by ambitious development objectives. This sets out the initial roadmap concept to build greater integration across the healthcare and academic institutions in the region.

We've successfully articulated a statement of purpose for the Health Sciences Academy, providing a clear strategic vision to guide our future endeavors. This forms part of the foundational work to build and support a collaborative, mutually beneficial system where education, research, training and innovation are embedded in the culture and fabric of healthcare in the region.

Governance and Reporting

Effective governance and clear reporting structures are critical to the success of our Academic Health Sciences System endeavours. They ensure strategic alignment, foster accountability, and provide the necessary framework for agile decision-making in our complex, multi-stakeholder environment. Some key achievements to support and develop a robust governance structure within the team include:

Mission Statement

The Academic Health Sciences Team is committed to improving the health of our communities by promoting collaborative partnerships with key stakeholders to:

Support education and training of healthcare professionals and students

Expand knowledge through enabling health research and innovation

Values

Respect | Collaboration | Leadership | Excellence | Advancement

Strategic alignment achieved through direct reporting line: HSA Manager reports to both the Head of Strategy and Transformation at ULHG and the Chief Academic Officer, ensuring cohesive leadership and clear accountability. Through performance management infrastructure including regular performance achievement reviews, one-on-one touchpoints and complete team meeting schedules, the team is supported to deliver high-standard of work and personal development. Project tracking system developed and in use by the team. These governance mechanisms drive accountability and strategic alignment across the organisation. This robust structure positions us to effectively execute on our research priorities and rapidly adapt to emerging opportunities in the academic health sciences landscape.



Highlights of 2023

The Power of Collaboration:

Building an Academic Health Sciences System in the Midwest Region



The Health Sciences Academy's partners, University of Limerick and UL Hospitals Group with the Midwest Community Healthcare & Midwest Public Health held the 1st Midwest Academic Health Science System Conference on 8th December 2023 at CERC, UHL. Featuring two University Presidents and regional HSE healthcare leaders, the conference demonstrated how the science of population health and clinical practice is so relevant in understanding health needs. It also showcased the impact of instilling an academic culture of teaching, research and innovation for healthcare professionals in career and continual professional development, and the impact on patient care.

Keynote speaker Professor David Burn shared their experience of building an academic health science structure in Newcastle, England, which expanded into their surrounding communities. The next steps for stakeholders in the Midwest to build on the work of the Health Sciences Academy were highlighted by Professor Helen Whelton, CAO SSW and Head of School UCC. Prof Paul Burke, Chief Academic Officer/Vice Dean (Health Sciences) and Miriam McCarthy, Health Sciences Academy Manager, wish to express a huge thank you to all who supported, participated and attended the conference.



Executive Panel

Left to Right: Prof Kerstin Mey, President, University of Limerick, Colette Cowan ,CEO, UL Hospitals, Maria Bridgeman, Chief Officer, Midwest Community Healthcare, Mai Mannix, Area Director, Public Health Midwest, Prof Vincent Cunnane, President, Technological University of the Shannon and Prof Paul Burke, Chief Academic Officer/ Vice Dean (Health Sciences).



The Power of Collaboration Organising Committee

Prof Paul Burke - UL / UL Hospitals, Suzanne Dunne - UL Hospitals, Dr Anne Dee - Dept Public Health, Prof Alan Donnelly - UL, Prof Audrey Tierney - UL, Verity Hayes - UL Hospitals, Laura Ginty - UL Hospitals, and Miriam McCarthy, UL / UL Hospitals

The Power of Collaboration:

Building an Academic Health Sciences System in the Midwest Region

THE POWER OF COLLABORATION:
Building an Academic Health Science System in the Midwest Region

Friday
8th December 2023

9.10am - 16.00pm
 REGISTRATION FROM 8.30AM

Clinical Education and Research Centre (CERC)
University Hospital Limerick



Keynote Speaker:
Professor David Burn
 Director of Newcastle Health Innovation Partners (NHIP),
 Pro-Vice Chancellor and Professor of Movement Disorders
 Neurology, Newcastle University

"NHIP delivers collaborative health and care research, innovation, education and training to improve citizen health, address health inequalities and generate economic growth".
 This is the principle of an academic health science system which we are developing in the Midwest.

Ospidéal OL UL Hospitals
 Working together, caring for you

UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK
 OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

HSE MID WEST
 COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

Programme Schedule

Registration and Networking	08:30 - 09:10
Opening Address & Introduction	09:10 - 09:35
Executive Panel Discussion <i>ULHG CEO, UL President, ULHG CAO, MWCH CO, Director - Public Health Midwest and TUS President</i>	09:35 - 10:15
Population Health and Science: Integration for Improvement <i>Clinical experts sharing examples followed by panel discussion</i>	10:15 - 11:25
Networking Break	11:25 - 11:50
Education & Innovation: AHSS Building Blocks <i>Clinical experts sharing examples followed by panel discussion</i>	11:50 - 13:00
Grand Rounds Speaker ✨ Professor David Burn <i>Director of Newcastle Health Innovation Partners (NHIP), Pro-Vice Chancellor and Professor of Movement Disorders Neurology, Newcastle University</i>	13:00 - 13:50
Lunch	13:50 - 14:35
Research Informing Practice: Impacting Patient Services <i>Clinical experts sharing examples followed by panel discussion</i>	14:35 - 15:45
Closing Address	15:45 - 16:00

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HSE MID WEST
 COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE



Keynote Speaker, **Prof David Burn**, Director of Newcastle Health Innovation Partners, Pro-Vice Chancellor and Professor of Movement Disorders Neurology, Newcastle University



Prof Barry Linnane, Consultant in Paediatric Respiratory, UL Hospitals and **Prof Leonard O'Sullivan**, Director of the Rapid Innovation Unit



Prof Paul Burke, Chief Academic Officer / Vice Dean (Health Sciences), UL Hospitals and University of Limerick, **Miriam McCarthy**, Health Sciences Academy Manager

The Foundation of Sláintecare

A report from discussions at a joint symposium of the Chief Academic Officers, Group Chief Executive Officers and Community Health Organisation Chief Officers of Ireland, held at Farmleigh House, Thursday, May 18th 2023.

The one-day colloquium was attended by over 100 delegates from the health sector, academia, research funders, charities and the public. The key themes of the importance of an Academic Health Sciences System for high-quality patient care; the Enhancement of patient care by overcoming obstacles within Transformative Research and Innovation; and Education and Training as the bedrock of Quality Patient Care, were considered across three sessions underpinned by open and frank debate. The event concluded with an overview and a discussion of what is needed to establish an Academic Health Sciences System (AHSS) in Ireland. The sessions brought the expertise of international and local speakers together with the experiences of those who work at the nexus between healthcare, academia, research and education. Vignettes provided insights to how an AHSS works in practice. Breaks encouraged engaged conversations, opportunities to network and practical discussions on the way forward.

It is vital that all see the bigger picture with good policies top-down and bottom-up with strategic thinking ensuring important development, e.g. electronic health records providing important insights. Philanthropy can play a role when this aligns with our values. Sláintecare is a new beginning for the Irish health service that highlights the importance of community care. The AHSS model, as part of Sláintecare, can provide better outcomes for patients, foster innovation, and attract and retain our brightest and most talented healthcare staff.

Further details and information on this meeting can be found [HERE](#).



Senior executive attendees including CAOs, Chief Officers from Community Organisations and CEOs of Hospital Groups



Chief Academic Officers in Ireland

Work Streams

Clinical Practice Integration



Equality and Inclusion



Research and Innovation



Education



NCHD Training & Support



Communications

1. Clinical Practice Integration

The Clinical Practice Integration theme is focussed on identifying and understanding the main clinical challenges for the people of the Midwest, from the perspective of patients, clinicians, researchers and students. Then, we concentrate on creating and putting into practice evidence-based solutions to address these issues.



ULMedX

UL MedX, Exercise is Medicine, is a pragmatic evaluation of the efficacy and sustainability of a community-based exercise programme for individuals living with chronic disease in CHO3. It started in September 2022 with two PhD students working as part of the project. The project steering group comprises members from across UL, CHO3, Limerick Sports Partnership and Health Sciences Academy, with a research project team, scientific advisory group and patient and public involvement panel (PPI) also forming part of the governance.

The purpose of the ULMedX project steering group (PSG) is to oversee the delivery of the programme, ensuring all staff are fully supported and that project deliverables, milestones and outputs are achieved as planned.

Key outcomes of steering group meetings:

1. The expansion of the ULMedX programme from its initial concept of 'cardiac disease' only to include three chronic disease populations, namely cardiac, pulmonary and type 2 diabetes. Thus, aligning ULMedX to the chronic disease hubs.
2. The need to map the 'system' for providing structured exercise opportunities for individuals with chronic disease in CHO3 (Limerick, Clare and Tipp) from both the participant and the professional's perspectives was identified. The 'system' means all the issues that might help patients being referred to and attending a structured exercise class within their community, and the things that might stop this happening effectively.
3. A list of key stakeholders to be invited to a systems workshop was developed by the PSG. Stakeholders comprise professionals involved in referral or service provision as per the national exercise referral framework (Woods et al., 2016).

The ULMedX Research Project Team (RPT) purpose is to ensure smooth day-to-day running of the programme, student supervision, data management and reporting. Key outcomes of the RPT meetings:

1. Delivery of the programme of research to meet project milestones.
2. Development of the ULMedX standard operating protocols and procedures.
3. Creation of the ULMedX logic model, and associated theory of change.
4. Ethical approval for the ULMedX study was obtained.
5. Conduct phase 1 of the trial with the cardiac patients, including referral, induction, provision of classes, and follow up testing.
6. Scoping of the requirements to add pulmonary and type 2 diabetes chronic diseases to the ULMedX portfolio.
7. Support the PhD students in obtaining their project goals, and enhancing their development as early career researchers

The scientific advisory group (SAG) will have responsibility for ensuring that the programme delivers quality learning experiences and conducts cutting-edge research that is relevant to national need and will advance the use of EIM within CHO3 and nationally.



Membership and details of the Public and Patient Involvement committee (PPI)

The PPI committee will be made up of the programme director or co-director, PhD students and PPI partners (i.e., patients living with each of the chronic diseases targeted). Their role will be to oversee/contribute to PPI input in service delivery, training/research programmes, and will be contributors to the PMB and SAG. The Public and Patient Involvement committee will be recruited in February 2024. It is envisaged that this group will cover cardia, pulmonary and Type 2 diabetes in line with the chronic disease hubs.

Intermediate Care Facility

Since 2020, a collaborative research project is ongoing based on the experiences of stakeholders involved in the Intermediate Care Facility. This work has been facilitated by the Health Sciences Academy between academics from UL's School of Allied Health and Department of Nursing and Midwifery and UL Hospitals Group staff members. The Principal Investigator is Prof Judi Pettigrew, co-investigators are Prof Audrey Tierney (both School of Allied Health), Assoc. Prof Liz Kingston and Assoc. Prof Maria Noonan (Department of Nursing and Midwifery), Prof Paul Burke (Chief Academic Office), Miriam McCarthy (Health Science Academy), Fiona Steed (Department of Health, former UL Hospitals Group), Hilary Curley (Research Assistant, Education and Health Sciences Faculty, UL) and Joanne Mannion (PhD student).

Semi-structured interviews and/or focus groups took place with 80 participants generating 49 data sets between September 2020 and February 2021. Transcription and subsequent data analysis was undertaken and a draft paper for publication was developed.

In autumn 2023, Joanne Mannion registered as a PhD student with the University of Limerick supported by an Education and Health Sciences Faculty PhD fee waiver and with the support of the Quality, Safety and Service Improvement Department in Mid-West Community Healthcare. Joanne graduated from the University of Limerick in 2014 with a Master of Science in Speech and Language Therapy. In 2020, Joanne received a professional diploma in Leadership and Management from University College Dublin. Joanne completed a graduate certificate in Advance Clinical Practice with UL and a certificate in Patient Safety and Complaints Advocacy with the Open Training College in 2022.



From 2014 – 2021 Joanne was employed as a Speech and Language Therapist in a variety of settings including the Mid-West Community Healthcare, Milford Care Centre, UL Hospitals and UL. Since 2021, Joanne has been working in Quality & Safety commencing in her current position as Quality, Risk & Patient Safety Advisor in the Mid-West Community Healthcare in 2023.

As a Speech and Language Therapist, Joanne developed a special interest in practice education and interprofessional education and practice. This developed through roles as Senior Speech and Language Therapist and Practice Tutor in UL Hospitals Group and Regional Placement Facilitator in UL. Joanne has experience in patient and public involvement in research and implementation of quality initiatives through her previous role as PALS Manager and current role.

Plans for Joanne's PhD outputs include research publications and a range of dissemination strategies based on stakeholders experience in the ICF with a focus on patients, staff, practice tutors and management.



Joanne Mannion, PhD student

2. Equality and Inclusion

The Equality and Inclusion work stream is focused on developing opportunities to support fair and equal access for professional development for all staff working in clinical areas. As well as staff, this area has a suite of projects that are designed for students at primary school, secondary school and pre-registration University level.

To lead this work, the Equality & Inclusion steering committee was established with representatives from across the partner organisations. Our aim is to advance the sustainability of the health science disciplines and quality patient-centred care through the advancement of equality and inclusion communities of practices. This aim is underpinned by the following values at all times:



- Equality
- Diversity of our workforce
- Inclusivity
- Integrity
- Shared team leadership
- Interprofessionalism
- Sustainability
- High quality and driven by positive patient impact
- Evidence-based practice



Allied Health Clinical Placement Forum

Clinical placements are an essential component of allied health education, providing students with hands-on experience and the opportunity to apply their theoretical knowledge in real-world settings. However, ensuring sustainable and high-quality clinical placements can be challenging, requiring collaboration and coordination between educational institutions and healthcare providers. The Health Sciences Academy has been actively working to address these challenges and strengthen the clinical placement experience for allied health students in the Mid-West Community Healthcare (MWCH) system.

Key initiatives and progress made by the HSA include:

1. Allied Health Forum

- The HSA has established an Allied Health Forum that meets regularly to focus on staff and student mapping for sustainable clinical placements in the community.

2. Collaboration with Department of Health

- The HSA is actively engaging with the Chief HSCP (Health and Social Care Professions) at the Department of Health to support and progress the development of sustainable clinical placements. This ensures that the HSA's efforts align with national priorities and benefit from the expertise and resources of the Department of Health.

3. Addressing Barriers and Enablers

- The HSA has identified barriers and enablers to sustainable clinical placements, in collaboration with allied health colleagues from community settings. Through a consultative process, these barriers and enablers are being addressed, with solutions identified, implemented and evaluated.



5. Interdisciplinary Induction Pack

- An interdisciplinary induction pack for allied health student placements in Children's Disability Networks has been developed and is set to be piloted in Q4 2023. This was developed by an interdisciplinary team with membership from UL and Children's Disability Network, facilitated by the Health Sciences Academy, in response to feedback for more specific knowledge for students and new graduates about PDS
- This initiative aims to streamline the orientation process and ensure that students are well-prepared for their placements.
- Funding from the National HSCP office has been secured to scale this induction pack, highlighting the potential for broader impact and dissemination.

By proactively addressing the challenges associated with sustainable clinical placements and collaborating with key stakeholders, the HSA is demonstrating its commitment to providing high-quality educational experiences for allied health students. The ongoing efforts to review staffing, map clinical requirements, and develop supportive resources like the interdisciplinary induction pack will help to ensure that students have access to meaningful, well-structured clinical placements that prepare them for successful careers in allied health professions.



AIPEC

The All Ireland Interprofessional Education Competition (AIPEC) is a prestigious event that brings together pre-registration students from eight universities across the whole island of Ireland work in an interprofessional way to address a case study. The competition is judged by subject matter experts on how well the team addressed the holistic needs of the fictional patient from physical, psychological and social perspectives. The University of Limerick (UL) has demonstrated its commitment to excellence in IPE by actively participating in and supporting the AIPEC competition. The case study in 2023 addressed the needs of a 57 year old gentleman who presented to ED with signs of a stroke. He has alcohol addiction and is homeless. The students had to address care plan for him from admission through to discharge,



Key highlights of UL's involvement in AIPEC include:

1. Internal Heat

- UL is the only university in the country to hold an internal AIPEC heat, providing its health sciences students with a unique opportunity to compete and hone their skills in preparation for the national competition. The winning team went forward to represent UL at the national event held in University of Galway. The internal committee includes colleagues from Nursing & Midwifery, Sylvia Murphy-Tighe, dietetics, Anne Griffith, and physiotherapy, Marie O'Donnell, as well as student leaders from the teams.

2. National Competition

- UL's health sciences students showcased their talents at the national AIPEC competition held at the University of Galway. The UL team's success in reaching the finals of the national competition highlights the high calibre of students and the quality of education provided by the university's health sciences programmes. UCD were crowned national AIPEC champions in what was a really informative and high quality event.

3. National Steering Committee

- The Health Sciences Academy Manager and Marie O'Donnell, physiotherapy, are both members of the national AIPEC steering committee, ensuring that UL has a voice in shaping the direction and development of this event.

- This involvement demonstrates UL's commitment to collaborating with other institutions and contributing to the advancement of interprofessional education at a national level.

4. Funding Support

- The Education and Health Sciences (EHS) Faculty supported the team's travel to Galway for the 2023 AIPEC competition. This financial support underscores the university's dedication to providing its students with opportunities to engage in national competitions and showcase their skills on a larger stage.



Interprofessional Education

Interprofessional education (IPE) is a crucial component of clinical programmes of study, as it prepares students from different healthcare disciplines to work collaboratively and effectively in real-world clinical settings. By bringing together students from various fields, such as medicine, nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and dietetics, IPE fosters a deeper understanding of each profession's roles, responsibilities, and unique contributions to patient care. This collaborative learning approach promotes teamwork, communication, and mutual respect, which are essential for providing high-quality, patient-centered care in an increasingly complex healthcare environment. The Health Sciences Academy provides an important focus for Inter-professional education.

This IPE pilot programme had a very successful 2023, with it being delivered in March and again in November. Students from health sciences programmes managed a case study scenario with a blend of simulation education, team meeting engagement and teamwork, providing students with a realistic, hands-on learning experience.

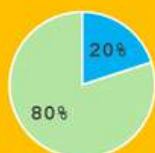
An evaluation of the student experience has been carried out and write-up is currently underway.

The IPE Case Study project team with participating students and Mary, our Simulation mannequin



Student feedback

'I would like to attend future IPE events'



■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree

'I would recommend this event to others'



■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree

JUNIOR HEALTH SCIENCES ACADEMY

Early Careers Event

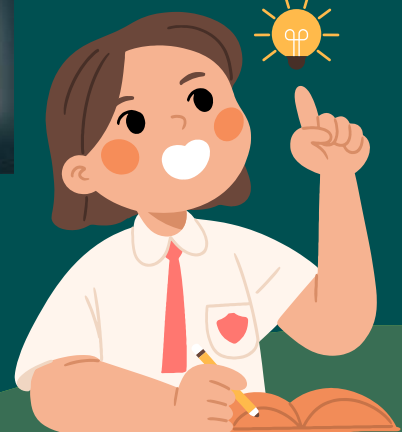
Transition Year and 5th Year students from across Ireland attended the Junior Health Sciences Academy, Virtual 'Early Careers' Event on February 28th 2023. This is the third year of the event, and showcased even more clinical roles as well as guest fireside chats with sports star Katie O'Brien, Para-rower and Jack Kavanagh, Pharmacist, Speaker and Facilitator. The event was developed and supported by colleagues from University of Limerick, UL Hospitals Group and Mid-West Community Healthcare in partnership with Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's Schools Division and Limerick Education Support Centre.



Thousands of students joined where they heard from staff and students in the areas of Nursing & Midwifery, Paramedic Studies, Medicine, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech & Language Therapy, Human Nutrition & Dietetics and Clinical Psychology. They also heard from clinical staff working in UL Hospitals Group in the areas of Podiatry, Radiography, Cardiac Physiologist and Ophthalmology. For the first time we introduced a "Business in Health" section, we heard from Operational Services, Human Resources staff and a student studying Business in University of Limerick, and their role in healthcare. Given the extremely busy nature of hospital settings, we understand that Transition Year students cannot come to hospitals or other clinical settings for work experience or tours, and so we have designed this event to be as informative and interactive as possible, showcasing healthcare as an option for further study and careers.

The event was captured on the Academy's X page @HealthSciAcadLK and videos of all presentations, course information and Q&A are available on our website:

www.HealthSciencesAcademy.ie



University of Limerick Open Day 2023 - Healthcare Professionals Speaker Series



For the first time, the Health Sciences Academy took part in the 'UL Open Days' on Thursday the 19th and Friday 20th October at the Health Sciences Building, University of Limerick. It was a great success. Over 600 secondary school students came to hear from Healthcare Professionals across UL Hospitals Group and Midwest Community Healthcare, on their career journey and 'A Day in the Life'. After each speaker, students had an opportunity to ask questions and speak directly with the Health Care Professionals at our HSA stand.

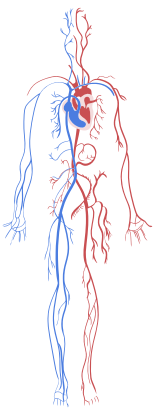
Staff from the following disciplines across UL Hospitals and Mid West Community Healthcare presented: Nursing, Public Health Nursing, Midwifery, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Medicine, GP Scheme, Clinical Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy and Dietetics. We express our gratitude to all the Healthcare Professionals who contributed to the success of this speaker series.



STEMI Patient Journey Launch

The Health Sciences Academy's Launch of the STEMI (ST Elevation Myocardial Infarction, a type of heart attack) Patient video took place with local Secondary School students, at the Clinical Education and Research Centre (CERC), University Hospital Limerick on the 11th of May 2023. Local students The Junior Health Sciences Academy is supporting second level students in early careers, health promotion and leadership through various initiatives.

The video aims to show TY Students the journey of a patient having a heart attack, from calling 999 through to having a stent inserted and completing cardiac rehab. It showcases 7 healthcare professionals undertaking their roles, with strong health promotion messages about heart health.



It is an ideal resource for any student considering a career in healthcare or anyone interested in understanding patient flow and team working. The interactive video now available as an educational resource www.HealthSciencesAcademy.ie

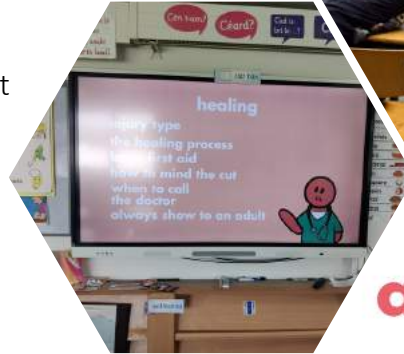
TY students from Coláiste Chiaráin, Croom; Gaelcholáiste Luimnigh; Castletroy College, Staff of UHL & National Ambulance Service (NAS) involved in the production of the STEMI Patient Journey Video at CERC, UHL, 11/05/2023.



Care Aware Crew

The Care Aware Crew aims to build leadership and health promotion skills among 3rd and 4th class pupils in the area of first aid, it was created and developed with clinical staff from UL Hospitals, Mid-west Community Healthcare, University of Limerick and Limerick & Clare Education & Training Board (LCETB). The project consists of five downloadable lessons each about a different aspect of First Aid. They were prepared by locally based clinical professionals following consultation with teachers and pupils who took part.

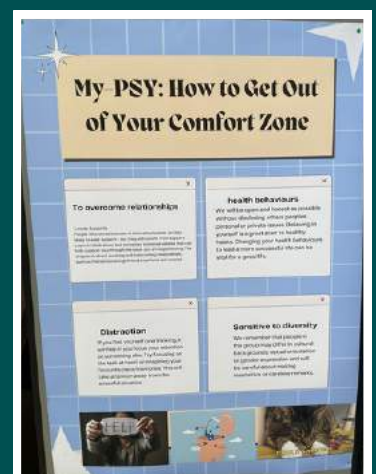
In 2023, building on the initial rollout from previous years, Phase 2 of the Care Aware Crew pilot has been successfully completed, with participation from 13 schools across Limerick and Clare. We are thrilled to announce that The Care Aware Crew has been awarded €10,000 from the JP McManus Trust. This funding will enable us to expand the program to more schools in the Mid West and enhance the existing first aid videos with new content.



My-Psy: Youth Mental Health Project

Congratulations to Dr Jennifer McMahan, School of Psychology, UL, Psychology Sarah O’Leary, PhD Researcher, UL & Project Coordinator for MYPsy who hosted the inaugural MY:SCI Conference at Kemmy Business School at University of Limerick on 27th April 2023.

This youth mental health event is aimed at transition year students, building their scientific knowledge and health promotion skills in the area of youth mental health, and is a collaboration between the Health Sciences Academy, LCETB and Jigsaw. Schools involved were Thomond Community College, Gaelcholaiste Luimnigh, Croom Community College, Mungret Community College; Castletroy College.



Equality and Inclusion Conference

Health Sciences Academy Equality and Inclusion Steering Committee hosted the second Equality and Inclusion Conference entitled “Change Management: Embracing Cultural Inclusivity” on 8th November 2023 at the CERC Auditorium, UHL. This year's event focused on change, inclusivity and staff support against the backdrop of the HSE organisational reform and the development of Regional Health Areas. Guest Speakers on the day were Dr Moran Anisman-Razin, Associate Professor in Work and Organisational Psychology, Kemmy Business School, University of Limerick & visiting Research Scholar Behavioural Science and Policy Centre Duke University; Ms. Lisa McDaid, HSE Organisation Development & Change Practitioner, Mr. Frank Guy Leadership & Performance Coach and panel speakers: Dr Joyce Tan, Shyna Kurian, Dovile Lee, Toland Eddyo & Dr Junaid Rasul Awan sharing their experiences on inclusivity.

The interactive Q & A session and Panel sessions were hugely popular with attendees and drove topical and insightful conversations around Change Management. Our colleagues very own stories added impactful practical facets to the event and follow up conversations as a whole.

Thank you to all the Healthcare Professionals who contributed to the success of this conference and we look forward to continuing collaborations for future Equality and Inclusion events.



Left: Panel Guest Speakers Dovile Lee, Shyna Kurian, Dr Joyce Tan, Dr Junaid Rasul Awan and Toland Eddyo. Health Sciences Academy project team, Dr Claire O'Donnell and Maura Fitzgerald & moderators on the days.

Irish Healthcare Awards

The Health Sciences Academy recently won the award for the Equality & Inclusion Steering Committee within the Equality, Culture & Diversity category at the Irish Healthcare Centre Awards. HSA were very proud to accept the award and to have been nominated for an additional two awards in the categories of Child Health & Wellbeing Community/Outpatient Setting: The Care Aware Crew and Student Programme: Early Careers Event.



3. Research and Innovation

Clinical research plays a crucial role in advancing healthcare and improving patient outcomes. By conducting rigorous scientific studies, researchers can develop new treatments, therapies, and interventions that enhance the quality of care and save lives. Building an Academic Health Sciences System (AHSS) is essential to fostering a culture of innovation and collaboration between healthcare institutions and academic partners, ultimately driving the translation of research findings into clinical practice.

The development of an AHSS brings together the expertise of clinicians, researchers, and educators to create a synergistic environment that promotes the exchange of knowledge and ideas. This collaborative approach enables the identification of pressing healthcare challenges and the development of targeted research initiatives to address them. By leveraging the strengths of each partner institution, an AHSS can accelerate the pace of discovery and ensure that research findings are quickly translated into tangible benefits for patients.



Research

2023 presented many opportunities and challenges for the Midwest research environment. Building a strong foundation for robust research requires a range supports and expertise, a culture and environment that recognises the value of research activity and has the capacity and ability to translate research findings into clinical practice.

Director of Research

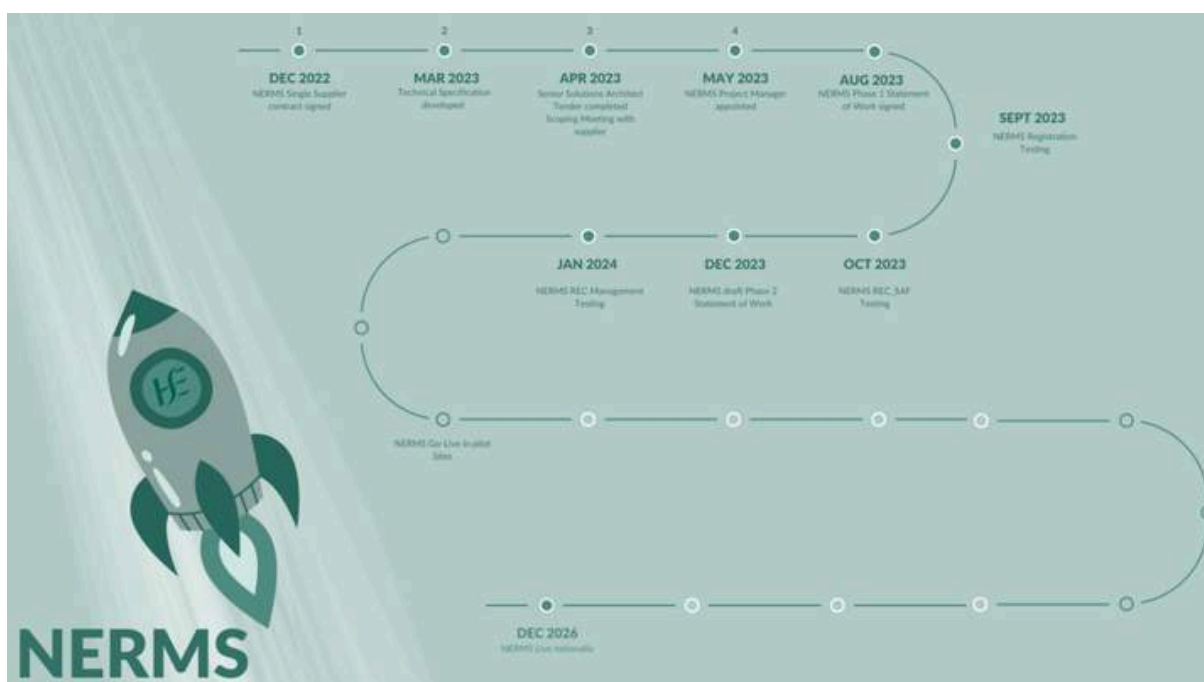
Prof Declan Lyons was appointed Director of Research for the HSE Midwest area in November 2023, the first such national appointment. His post aims to support research projects from small student studies to complex interventions investigations and multicentre international trials. The vision is that the research function will provide a single point of entry for researchers and streamline the research approval process with support throughout and shared learning opportunities on completion.



Research Governance

- Establishing clear research governances is essential to ensure the integrity, ethics, and quality of clinical research. Separating research governance from clinical ethics, and transferring this to the Research Governance Manager was a positive step in this direction. Unfortunately, this was tempered when this role was vacated when the Research Governance Manager moved to another role. Their replacement has been impacted by the HSE recruitment embargo.

- On a national level, the development of an online NERMS (National Electronic Research Management System) is a hugely positive development in supporting and facilitating research.



Legal Expertise

- Securing dedicated legal expertise is essential to navigating the complex regulatory landscape surrounding clinical research and ensuring compliance with data protection and privacy laws.
- Legal support helps to mitigate risks, protect intellectual property, and ensure that research agreements are properly structured and executed.

In 2023, we built really strong relationships with the National HSE Legal team with processes developed for legal support and advice in managing research contracts. Ongoing engagement with University of Limerick legal team has enabled collaborative projects to progress with robust legal processes and agreements in place.

Data Protection

Ensuring data is properly managed during the course of research and afterwards is of critical importance. All research conducted by the HSE and its funded organisations must comply with relevant Data Protection legislation. This includes obtaining consent from the prospective participants for the processing of their personal data for research purposes as part of the overall process of obtaining consent.

Responding to this need, and with the absence of a DPO in the HSE Midwest region, data protection advice and assurance is sourced through AllOne Ltd, providing researchers with the expert support and guidance required. This was a significant positive development in building an enabling research culture in the Midwest which has benefited all researchers who have secured research ethics with HSE Midwest.

Collaborations and Partnerships

- Fostering collaborations between healthcare institutions, academic partners, and industry stakeholders is essential to leveraging diverse expertise and resources. This is one of the key benefits of working within an academic health sciences system.
- Establishing a secondment processes for researchers facilitates the exchange of knowledge and skills between institutions, promoting cross-disciplinary research and innovation. Work has commenced to implement a secondment process across UL Hospitals Group and University of Limerick to enable collaborative research across the organisations. This is a really positive and welcome development, which will enable high quality research.



PPI in Research

Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) is a crucial component of healthcare research, as it ensures that the perspectives, experiences, and needs of patients and the wider community are taken into account throughout the research process. By actively engaging patients and the public, researchers can develop more relevant, patient-centered research questions, design more appropriate study protocols, and ultimately produce findings that have a greater impact on patient care and health outcomes. Recognising this, and combining the research expertise of UL, clinical expertise from UHL and patient experience, a Cancer PPI Steering Committee was established. This is a unique group due to its interorganisational membership and role to build PPI capacity in the region.



1. Cancer PPI Steering Committee

- This has been established, meeting monthly with membership comprising public members, UL academic and research colleagues, clinicians, PALS and co-chaired by the Health Sciences Academy Manager and PPI member.

Key activities in the year include contributions to research grants, many of which have been successful, and building a process to recruit members of the public and patients who would like to become involved in research. Funding from PPI Ignite at UL enabled the development of a promotional recruitment video and a promotional flyer.

2. PPI Infrastructure

- Terms of Reference, a PPI volunteer application form, recruitment process, and induction plan have been agreed upon and put in place, providing a structured framework for engaging and onboarding PPI volunteers.

As the HSA continues to develop and refine PPI infrastructure and activities with the Cancer Research team, this learning will enable the foundations to scale PPI activity and support staff in undertaking high-quality, impactful research that directly benefits patients and the wider community. The insights and contributions of PPI volunteers will help to shape research questions, inform study designs, and ensure that findings are effectively translated into practice, ultimately leading to improved patient care and health outcomes.



NAPCRG Conference

In October, the Health Sciences Academy Manager and PPI Ignite colleagues from UL School of Medicine and [PPI Ignite @ UL](#) delivered a workshop on a PPI Ignite project called *“Changing the landscape: Building capacity for patient & community involvement: Experiences from the US & Ireland”*. This CASFM-PHR workshop showcased the work of UL Hospitals and UL in building PPI capacity at the [51st NAPCRG Conference](#) in San Francisco in October 2023. NAPCRG, the North American Primary Care Research Group, supports and nurtures clinicians, scientists, students and patients around the world as they pursue primary care research.

The Health Science Academy continues collaborations with key stakeholders greater enable PPI in health research, with plans for educational programmes for clinicians in Autumn 2024.

Meaningful PPI involvement occurs where members of the public are actively involved in research projects and in research organisations.

Examples of public involvement:

- as joint grant holders or co-applicants on a research project
- identifying research priorities
- as members of a project advisory or steering group
- commenting and developing patient information leaflets or other research materials
- undertaking interviews with research participants
- user and/or carer researchers carrying out the research.



Dr Meghan Guilfoyle and her research entitled “Do you trust me?”



Miriam McCarthy at the conference workshop

Innovation

2023 presented many opportunities for the Midwest innovation environment. Health Sciences Academy were involved in and supported innovative pilot launches and initiatives from UL Hospitals, UL and Rapid Innovation Unit. The Mid West Innovation in Healthcare Committee grew in its membership and began planning the inaugural Mid West Innovation Funding Call sponsored by Spark Innovation Programme. Building and enhancing strong momentum in the cultural change in mindsets in relation to Innovation in Healthcare.

Mid West Innovation in Healthcare Committee

Ann Marie Kiernan was elected Chairperson of the Midwest Innovation in Healthcare Committee in October 2023.

The purpose of the committee is to foster and embed a culture of innovation in the Mid-West healthcare eco-system through the pillars of education, design, support and communication in order to achieve the most efficient and high quality healthcare. The committee activity has led to a collaboration of innovation champions from across UL Hospitals Group, Mid-West Community Health, Public Health Mid-West, Health Sciences Academy, Rapid Innovation Unit and the University of Limerick. The inaugural Mid West Innovation in Healthcare funding call has been a goal of the committee since its development.

Fostering an understanding that to identify and overcome barriers to better healthcare, it is vital to address them through the eyes of those facing them, and innovator colleagues are the epitome of champions for healthcare improvement. In an era defined by unprecedented technological advancements and societal challenges, the need for innovative solutions in healthcare has never been more pressing. This committee also drives the means of supporting visionaries and change-makers who are dedicated to improving healthcare outcomes and enhancing patient experiences.

Innovation is about embracing a culture of continuous improvement, where every voice is heard, every idea is valued, and every effort contributes to our shared vision of a healthier tomorrow. It encompasses a mind-set—a commitment to continuous improvement, collaboration, and a relentless pursuit of excellence.

The Committee collaborate closely with HSE Spark, who continue to support and nurture ideas into impactful solutions on which the future of healthcare is shaped.



Ann Marie Kiernan Chairperson of the Mid West Innovation in Healthcare Committee



Mid West Innovation in Healthcare Committee

Niall DeLoughry - UL, Mairead de Brun - UL Hospitals, Dr Louise Kiernan - UL, Siobhan Meany - RIU, Ann Marie Kiernan - UL Hospitals, Yvonne Young - UL Hospitals, Aisling Finucane - MW Community, Patricia O'Gorman, UL Hospitals, Miriam McCarthy, UL / UL Hospitals, Dr Sinead Donoghue - Public Health and Dr Rachel McNamara, Public Health. Additional members: Prof Leonard O'Sullivan, RIU, Briga Hynes, UL, Noreen Kennedy, St John's Hospital & Leonora Carey, ULHG.

Innovation in Healthcare Funding Call

In December The Midwest Innovation in Healthcare Committee launched the Call for Ideas that would give time back to healthcare staff. This initiative is funded by HSE Spark Innovation Programme and supported by the Design Thinking workshop which will be followed by a pitching final at CERC UHL. Up to €3,000 funding to be awarded to the winning proposal.



Health Sciences Academy
 Spark
 Midwest Innovation Call

**MIDWEST INNOVATION CALL:
 DO YOU HAVE AN
 INNOVATIVE IDEA THAT
 COULD GIVE TIME BACK TO
 HEALTHCARE STAFF?**

Up to €3000 in Innovation Funding available for healthcare workers with winning proposals!

Closing Date: 12th January 24

[Submit your ideas here](#)

National Innovation Network Meeting

In November, the Rapid Innovation Unit (RIU) & the Midwest Innovation Committee were delighted to host the meeting of the National Innovation Network. This provided a strong networking meeting of healthcare innovators from academia, public health and hospitals nationally collaborating to improve patient-centredness and solution-focused care in health and social care.



Rapid Innovation Unit



Rapid Innovation Unit (RIU) wins SPARK Ignite Award

Rapid Innovation Unit's Dr Aidan O'Sullivan and Siobhan Meany won the overall national Spark Innovation Ignite award at the 2023 Spark Summit. Their idea of "Pressure Boxes" a solution that seeks to cut down the time it takes to manually inflate pressure bags using new equipment is a perfect example of how collaborative design creates innovative solutions to everyday needs.

Dr Kevin O'Sullivan, RIU presenting at Spark Summit 2023 showcasing how 3D printing allows for creation of devices and aides for patients bespoke solutions for patients that require these. RIU provide innovative solutions to the small handful of patients that require something different when an off the shelf solution may not exist. Patients can receive tailor made solutions to greatly improve their care and quality of life.



Innovation Day

The Spark Innovation funded bursaries at RIU's Innovation Day resulted in University Teacher Claire McNamara, Mid West Nursing UL being selected as one of two prize winners of the Spark Bursary. Her idea is using 3D printing to create physical models to improve practical education of handwashing techniques. Community Speech & Language Therapist Sarah Curran won the second bursary for her idea to design a more aesthetically pleasing volume controlled cup. A new design was created by a team from Product Design Faculty, UL as part of the Real World Studio to bring it to a conceptual model for RIU.



Rapid Innovation Unit's Launch of Custom 3D Printed Breast prostheses

RIU officially launched a pilot service in UHL to create custom 3D printed breast prostheses for survivors of breast cancer. Pictured at the launch are Dr Kevin O'Sullivan, Professor Paul Burke, Emma Jude Lyons, PhD Researcher, Dr Loraine Walsh, Professor Leonard O'Sullivan and Dr Chwanrow Baban. This launch featured on RTE's Hospital Live television programme.



MSc Design in Health and Wellbeing

Students from the MSc Design for Health and Wellbeing in the School of Design at UL in 2022 worked with the Patient Experience Committee in UL Hospitals Group to develop creative solutions to improve communication with patients. A pilot was subsequently undertaken in Nenagh Hospital using the patient information cards they designed to support patients with information about their treatments and tests.

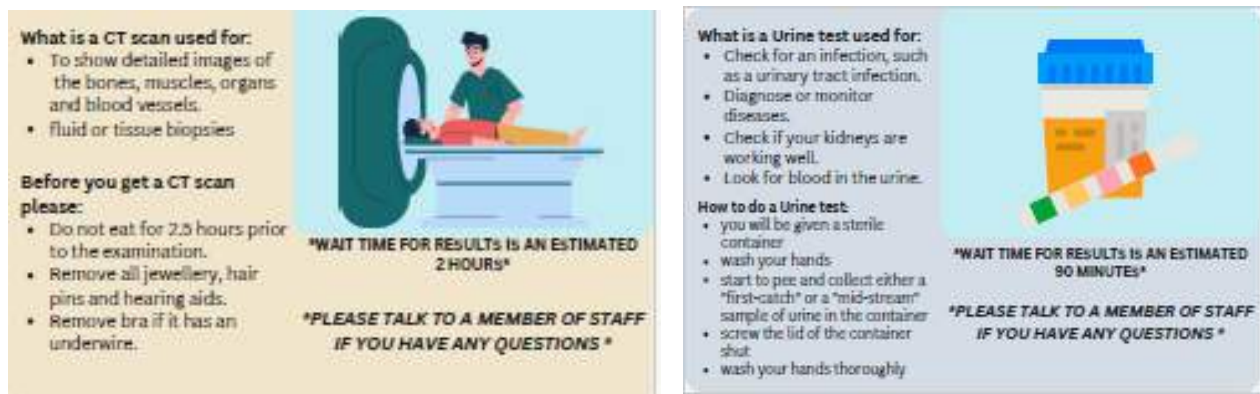


Immersion Observations and Design Ideas

- Students from the MSc Design for Health & Wellbeing program conducted immersion observations and shared their design ideas with chairs of the Patient Experience Committee, following a request to explore improving communication with patients.

Implementation of Student-Generated Solutions

Feedback from the students was shared with the Patient Experience Committee, and actions are underway to implement some of the impactful solutions identified by the students.



These information cards were developed in response to communication needs identified by both patients and staff. They have been successfully piloted in Nenagh Hospital.

This highlights the tangible impact that student involvement can have on improving patient care and experiences.

Students returned to UL Hospitals Group in October and November as part of the immersion element of their programme, to support staff in Paediatric Outpatients and UMHL. They met with staff, observed work flows and identified opportunities to improve both patient and staff experience. Applying their creativity and design skills, they will identify innovative solutions to current challenges.

The Importance of Student Involvement

Strengthening educational opportunities for students is essential to ensure the development of a skilled, knowledgeable, and compassionate healthcare workforce. By providing students with hands-on, immersive experiences and opportunities to apply their learning in real-world settings, educational institutions can better prepare them for the challenges and responsibilities they will face as healthcare professionals. Collaborations between academic programs and healthcare organisations, such as the partnership between the MSc Design for Health & Wellbeing programme and the Health Sciences Academy play a crucial role in bridging the gap between theory and practice, another example of how academic and clinical expertise combine for enhanced outcomes for patients.

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Students from the MSc Design for Health and Wellbeing Klara Moylan, Siobhan Tobin, Michelle Howard Student & HSCP SPARK fellow, Eoin Kenny, Caroline Griffin with Kellie Morrissey, Lecturer & Louise Kiernan Course Director.

In October 2023, 8 students undertook immersion experiences in the Paediatrics OPD and Caterpillar Unit, focusing on identifying opportunities to enhance patient and staff experiences. They subsequently presented to the Paediatrics team with the observations and ideas for further development.

By providing students with immersive experiences and opportunities to contribute to real-world challenges, the HSA is not only enhancing their educational journey but also leveraging their unique perspectives and skills to drive improvements in patient care and staff experiences. These initiatives demonstrate the mutual benefits of collaboration between academic programs and healthcare organizations, as students gain valuable hands-on experience while healthcare providers benefit from fresh insights and innovative solutions.



MSc Design for Health & Wellbeing Immersion

In October 2023, design students from UL will visit your healthcare setting as part of their MSc work. They'll be carrying out field research through observations, with an eye to learning what opportunities for design exist in healthcare in Ireland today.

We'd really appreciate if you could help them out by thinking about, and directing them to observe, areas in your everyday work that you feel are challenging, and could be solved or made easier with a design lens. These opportunities may arise through patient feedback and/or staff experience. You could also direct them to opportunities for design through sharing 'hacks' or workarounds you've come up with!

I can never get my pulse oximeter to read well on thin, cold fingers...

I work long hours but end up feeling really lonely at home. Sometimes I wish there was more social support in this job.

I put toothpaste in between 2 surgical masks when things get smelly!

These students won't be here to judge or criticise you or your work, and will only take written, anonymous field notes. At the end of their project they'll compile and present their findings - along with any design ideas - to your workplace.

Some areas that may pose interesting design challenges are:

- Physical demands
- Challenging anatomy
- Infection protocols
- Issues with equipment
- Social and emotional challenges
- Time consuming processes or workflows
- Technology integration
- Safety concerns
- Administrative tasks
- Lifting and transferring patients
- Manual dexterity

Any questions? Please mail Course Director Dr. Louise Kiernan: louise.kiernan@ul.ie

One of the Students tweeted that she was "Buzzing with ideas after a 2 day immersion at UHL designing for Health and Wellbeing. Another great opportunity for learning and connecting thanks to Health Sciences Academy & UL." In November, students from the MSc Design for Health and Wellbeing in the School of Design at UL were welcomed by the team at UMHL. Priyanka Puthanveetil and Ayuko Yoshida met with staff, observed work flows with the aim of identifying opportunities to improve both patient and staff experience.

4. Education

The Health Sciences Academy aims to provide an excellent, transformative student experience with a focus on interdisciplinary training and innovative technologies, citizenship and leadership, developing future-ready healthcare professionals. The suite of training programmes is designed to meet the needs of healthcare professionals, both pre- and post-qualification, and to ensure that the training is as accessible and flexible as possible.

CHILDREN'S DISABILITY NETWORK

INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING RESOURCE CREATED TO SUPPORT ALLIED HEALTH STUDENTS WHO ARE UNDERTAKING CLINICAL PLACEMENTS IN CHILDREN'S DISABILITY NETWORK TEAMS.

INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

PREPARING HEALTH SCIENCES STUDENTS FOR POST-REGISTRATION WORKING IN MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TEAMS

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH

DISCOVER POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND HEALTH SCIENCES



Professional Pathways Roadshows

Supporting staff continual Professional development is one of the objectives of the Health Sciences Academy. In December the Health Sciences Academy organised a promotional roadshow series for UL Graduate Professional Studies (GPS) Nursing & Midwifery across the UL Hospitals Group and St. John's Hospital, Limerick on upskilling initiatives and funding opportunities for professional learners.

There was amazing support from Graduate Professional Studies, Department of Nursing and Midwifery UL, Flexible Learning Centre, Faculty of Science and Engineering, University of Limerick, Faculty of Education and Health Sciences UL, Kemmy Business School, Operational Services and Directors of Nursing & Midwifery.

We are delighted to have added this bi annual roadshow series to the calendar. There are a number of micro credential modules that may be of interest to HSE staff will be subsidised by 50% through the HEA so applicants will only have to pay 50% of the fee from March 2024 - October 2025. The roadshow series will take place again in both Spring and Winter 2024.



UL Graduate Professional Studies

The University of Limerick offers an extensive suite of part-time online, blended and in-person professional programmes. Developed specifically for working professionals or those who wish to return to the workforce, these courses are fully accredited, focused on employability and are flexible in design and delivery.

Dedicated to working professionals who can complete courses to attain Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas, Masters and Professional Doctorates at UL.

- Short courses (Micro-credentials many of which are partially or fully funded for HSE Staff)
- And Funding Supports for professional learners

Micro Credentials at UL

UL is one of seven universities working to deliver short, stackable learning as part of the national MicroCreds Project, and similarly, the UL@Work project has delivered over 20, one-year, part-time Professional Diplomas, which can be combined or stacked to achieve a new flexible Masters called the Master of Professional Practice. These initiatives have been accelerated through UL's engagement with the Human Capital Initiative (HCI) to date.

The 50% – 80% learner fee subsidy is designed to raise awareness of the benefits of micro-credential learning and encourage participation in the courses, while offering courses at a reduced fee rate. The goal is to directly increase Ireland's lifelong learning participation rates.



Clinical Education and Research Centre (CERC)

The Clinical Education Research Centre (CERC) has experienced a vibrant and dynamic year filled with a diverse array of activities aimed at enhancing knowledge, collaboration, and professional development. UL Hospital Grand Rounds on Fridays have been a cornerstone, providing a forum for insightful presentations and discussions with a varied range of speakers across a broad spectrum of clinical specialities.

Students from across all healthcare disciplines availed of the first-class facilities in CERC for tutorials and lectures. New staff inductions of NCHDs, Interns and Nurses at CERC, were a success, and set a positive tone for the incoming medical professionals.

Our academic landscape has been further enhanced by conferences like the Sylvester O'Halloran Surgical Symposium, UL Hospitals Health & Wellbeing, the Annual Irish Research Nurses and Midwives Network Conference, and the Power of Collaboration, which brought specialists together and promoted multidisciplinary collaboration.

CERC also hosted multiple study days focused on continuous education of our healthcare professionals; they included training in national frailty education, perinatal mental health, maternal mortality, ophthalmic education, and paediatric cardiology.



Grand Rounds at CERC

In April Health Care professionals and faculty members attended an inspiring Grand Rounds delivered from Keynote Guest speaker **Professor Helen Whelton of UCC** with many examples of an academic health sciences system vision and benefits. Pictured Professor Austin Stack, Professor Helen Whelton and Professor Paul Burke.



Simulation at CERC

The simulation facility at CERC was officially launched on Thursday 14th September 2023. This space is used to deliver simulation-based teaching to doctors, nurses and allied health professionals, at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, in order to develop their key clinical and procedural skills. Professor Paul Burke, Chief Academic Officer ULHG and Vice Dean of Health Sciences UL gave an opening address. Dr Alan Watts, Consultant in Emergency Medicine, ULHG and associate professor in the School of Medicine, UL, led a group of medical students through a simulated acute medical emergency involving a car crash victim. Professor Colum Dunne, Head of the UL School of Medicine gave a closing address.



Simulation Facility's Official Launch – Medical Students Simulating an Acute Medical Emergency. Some photography of the simulation centre includes students and staff in role play training where they are not in a clinical setting with real patients so they may not have IP & C guidelines in place e.g. gloves and no jewellery.

Aside from the day-to-day teaching of 3rd and 4th year medical students and Interns, the space has been used by Nurse & Midwifery for Venepuncture, IV Cannulation and IV Study Day simulation sessions, ACLS ran by resus department, critical care transport day for ICU/HCU, ultrasound course ECHO/ FUSIC heart, respiratory simulation training for physiotherapy students, and MRCPI exams.

Dr Mark Skehan, Consultant Gynaecologist, utilised the space and the birthing manikin 'Victoria' to generate a video to show his kiwi delivery technique.

UL ULHG Simulation Lab Official Launch



University of Limerick and UL Hospitals Group officially launched a new simulation facility at University Hospital Limerick providing undergraduate and postgraduate doctors, nurses and allied health professionals with simulation training in a range of clinical procedures. The Simulation Lab has a wide variety of equipment in its simulation-based education and training programmes, including full-body manikins and task trainers (adult, paediatric and maternity).

In addition to regular teaching, several other events have been hosted in the Simulation Lab since the summer of 2022, including advanced cardiac life support (ACLS), clinical induction training for Interns, Interprofessional education teaching with health sciences students, MRCPI examinations, organ donation education, basic ECHO training, and Adult Critical Care Transport training.

Basic Laparoscopy Skills Course

Laparoscopic simulators were purchased for NCHD trainees by the NDTP. The first 'Basic Laparoscopy Skills' course was held in Clinical Skills Room 1 in CERC on Friday 29th September 2023. The training lead was Mr Nasir Ahmad.

He was supported by Mr Chwanrow Baban and two surgical Regs on the day. There were 12 trainees in total. Participants were awarded 7 external CPD points from RCSI.



Basic Laparoscopy Skill Course in Clinical Skills Room 1

Intern Induction

On June 27th and 28th of last year, the clinical skill rooms hosted intern induction training sessions. 74 interns successfully completed 10 fundamental procedural tasks, including nasogastric tube insertion, arterial blood gas sampling, and EKG. 21 facilitators were present. The clinical skills portion of the 2-week induction has consistently been among the intern's "favourite" and has frequently been cited as "most useful" in feedback gathered over the past 5 years. A lot of supplies and equipment are used for this event. The Chief Academic Officer funded the vast bulk of consumables this year via NDTP funding.



4. NCHD Training and Support

We were delighted to welcome two new staff to the Postgraduate Training Team.



Dovile Lee

Regional RCPI Coordinator

Dovile worked in Ennis Hospital since 2019 as a PA to Director of Nursing and Business Manager. While it was a busy and fast changing environment, Dovile enjoyed working with multidisciplinary team. She is a graduate of BA (Hons) in Business studies in Griffith College and excels at enhancing services through a high standard approach.

In her role, Dovile works closely with Regional Programme Director and RCPI head office to ensure doctor trainees undertaking RCPI schemes receive the necessary educational support locally.



Mairead de Brun

NDTP & Health Sciences Academy Coordinator

Mairead graduated with a Masters degree International Tourism majoring in Marketing, UL, degree in Business and Professional Certificate in Digital Marketing. Mairead has a strong background in marketing and has successfully led various projects in the healthcare and medical devices industry in Ireland the Middle East and Globally. She is dedicated to promoting innovation to clinicians and patients, and her work has been recognised with prestigious awards. She is actively involved in committees and taskforces aligned to the Health Sciences Academy.

NCHD Inductions

In January and July the Training Lead Team welcome the new NCHDs (non-consultant hospital doctors) who start their inductions at UHL. A brief introduction and presentation is provided to the new NCHDs at CERC Auditorium. They join a dedicated team of consultants, doctors, nurses & HSCPs.



Nenagh Residence Room and Library Refurbishment

Thanks to the generous funding provided by the National Doctors Training and Planning (NDTP) Training Lead Fund, project support from NDTP Coordinator, Verity Hayes and in collaboration the Maintenance department staff in Nenagh, Director of Scheduled care John Doyle and Nenagh Executive team we completed an impressive new refurbishment of the Doctors' Residence and Library in Nenagh Hospital. NCHD's were heavily involved in the redesign and the project encompassed a comprehensive transformation, including the installation of new fixtures, vibrant painting, minor construction works, and the acquisition of modern furniture. The purpose of this refurbishment was to aid in improving morale, reducing fatigue, reducing burnout and assist with staff retention of NCHDs. Supplying a suitable working environment where NCHD's could undergo online training, research and education that would also enhance patient care.



Nenagh NCHD's with Dr Andrew Scott - Respiratory and GIM Consultant, Angela O'Sullivan – Nenagh Business Manager, Breege Mulcaire – Administrator, Tony McBride - Maintenance and Verity Hayes - NDTP Coordinator.



UL Hospitals NCHD Conference

In 2023 the NDTP Training Lead Office Held its third annual UL Hospitals NCHD Conference. Despite 2022/23 being another challenging year for all healthcare workers and NCHDs, 160 diverse research projects were submitted across the disciplines of Medicine, Surgery, Paediatrics, Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Anaesthesia, Radiology, Psychiatry and the Intern Network.

After a rigorous selection process by academics, eight winning abstracts were chosen as the best in their specialty and presented live at the conference, with all platform presenters receiving an engraved silver medal plus an One4All voucher. The overall winner of the platform session will receive an engraved gold medal and a €1000 One4All voucher.

We are particularly grateful to our Chief Executive Officer, Professor Colette Cowan and Chief Clinical Director, Professor Brian Lenehan for their continued support. We would also like to acknowledge the strong support that we have received from the Chief Academic Officer, Professor Paul Burke.



Overall Winner - Platform Presentation

Dr Bing Wei Thaddeus Soh - Medicine

R Cusack, M Waters, C O'Connor, S Arnous, T Kiernan

Post-percutaneous coronary intervention CYP2C19 genotyping in an Irish Population: The potential role in identifying clopidogrel therapy related bleeding risks



Specialty Abstract Winners

Dr Glenn Curtin Intern Network

Dr Jane O'Sullivan Anaesthetics

Dr Kevin McKeivitt Surgery

Dr Clare Crowley Obstetrics & Gynaecology

Dr Susan Giblin Paediatrics

Dr Frank McKenna Psychiatry

Dr Lorraine Murray Radiology



Electronic Poster Winners

Electronic Poster 1st place

Dr Bing Wei Thaddeus Soh

Medicine

S Morad, R Cusack, C O'Connor, I Ullah, S Arnous, T Kiernan

Severe Aortic Incompetence from IGG4-Related Disease Associated Interventricular Septal Mass: An Unlikely Diagnosis

Electronic Poster 2nd place

Dr Nese Gadzama Paediatrics

S Mullahy, H Noonan, O Neylon

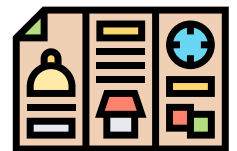
Exploration of Paediatric Mortality Over Six Years in a Regional Centre

Electronic Poster 3rd place

Dr Laura Ryan Medicine

K Sebastian, R Isfahani, L Casserly

70% Alcohol Wipes and Fractured Dialysis Catheter Hubs, a possible link?



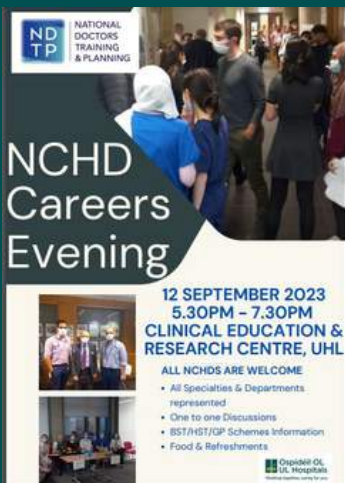
Effective Medical Interview Skills

In December SHOs, Regs & SpRs from UL Hospitals attended the annual Effective Medical Interview Skills workshops provided by Jo Irwin, i4 Training in CERC in December. These workshops are organised annually ahead of the scheme & non scheme interviews. These popular workshops are organised by UL Hospitals Training Lead Team and sponsored by NDTP Jo Irwin, i4 Training also offers additional 1;1 medical interview coaching.



Doctors Careers Evening

In September, the Training Lead team and Lead NCHDs hosted the annual Doctor’s Careers Evening with 30 medical specialties and departments participating in this evening event at CERC, UHL. Up to 80 people attended the event which was officially opened by the CAO Professor Paul Burke. Feedback was hugely positive with mentions of the presentations plus one to one format being very well received by attendees. This annual event is set to take place again in September 2024.



Medical Council Inspection

In July the Medical Council met with UL Hospitals key stakeholders via video conference in relation to the Action Implementation Report for the group. Further subgroup meetings and reviews were carried out with St John's Hospital Executive Management, Training Lead and the Medical Council to support and assist in recommendations. The feedback from the Medical Council on the day was positive and the updated AIP is due to be provided in 2024. Following receipt of the updated AIP the Training Lead will reconvene the key stakeholder committee meetings to ensure monitoring and adherence is in place. There are no site inspections scheduled across ULHG in 2024. There is a possibility that there will be one in Nenagh Hospital due to the new intake of Interns at Nenagh Hospital in 2024 or 2025.



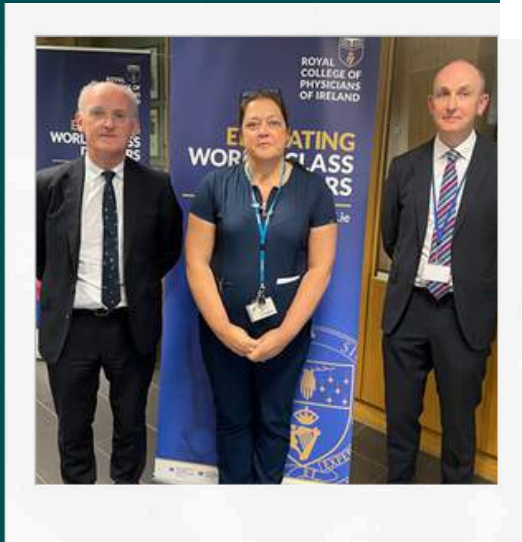
NCHD Leads

In August the ULHG Leads and Training Lead team held the annual Doctors Careers Evening at CERC, UHL. Representatives, presenters and facilitators from all hospital sites were involved and it was very well attended. Some feedback included NCHD saying one to one conversations and the presentation at the Careers Evening helped her to make her decision in selecting which specialty to pursue.



RCPI Study Days

Geriatrics HST Study Day among many other was held in CERC (Clinical Education and Research Centre) on the 28th April 2023 organised by Dr Colin Quinn, Consultant Geriatrician was a great success. More than 40 trainee doctors on RCPI HST scheme attended this full day event from all over the country.



Thank you to Dr Colin Quinn and SpR Dr Nur Atikah Mohd Asri for organising the Study Day.



Trainees enjoyed a diverse programme consisting of 8 presenters, with topics on IT strategies for geriatricians, leadership challenges, procurement, research, information on preparing a business case and service development through the years.

RCPI Presentation to Interns

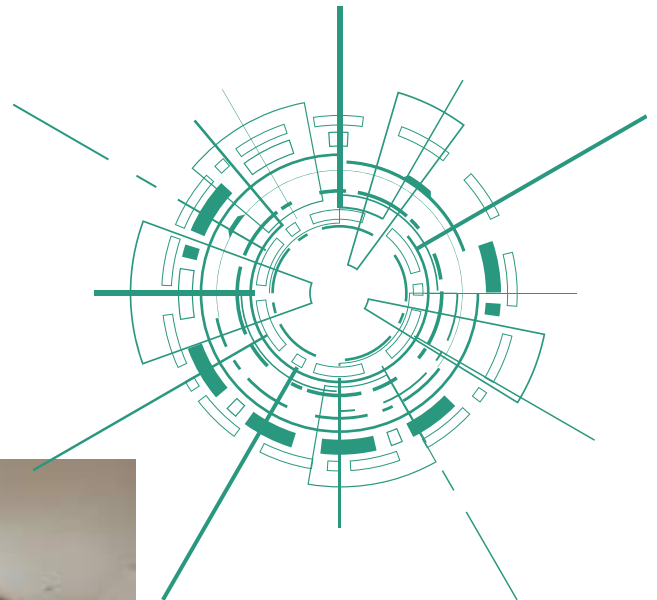
Doctor trainees from General Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Paediatrics and Public Medicine RCPI presented to Interns on Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI) programmes available to them. Basic Specialist Training (BST) is a hospital-based training programme completed in Senior House Officer (SHO) posts. It prepares doctors for Higher Specialist Training (HST), which is the final stage of training.

BST is structured so that doctors rotate to a different post every three months, letting them experience different subspecialties and clinical teams.

In addition to supervised clinical training in the hospital, doctors will need to complete exams and courses designed to help them to develop professionally and acquire the skills and knowledge needed to provide excellent patient care.

UL Hospitals Group interns were informed about the application, recruitment process for the schemes available to them which include:

- BST Schemes for GIM
- BST Schemes for Paediatrics
- BST Schemes for Obs & Gynae
- BST Schemes for Histopathology



MRCPI Exams in Medicine

Great success of MRCPI (Membership Royal College of Physicians Ireland) exams in Medicine held in the CERC building on the 20th October and 16th June 2023, organised by local convener, Dr Hilary O’Leary. Membership of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (MRCPI) is an internationally-recognised benchmark of excellence, valued by healthcare employers worldwide.

NCHDs complete a mixture of clinical cases and communications case in a 2 hour exam. Thanks to consultant examiners, invigilators, nurses, patients and actors for collaborative efforts.



Examiners on the 16th June 2023



UL Medical students,
Invigilators assisting with exams


**ROYAL
COLLEGE OF
PHYSICIANS
OF IRELAND**



Local convener consultant
Haematologist Dr Hilary O’Leary and
Nurse Catherine Tierney

RCPI Basic Specialist Training Teaching

Monday lunchtime Teaching continuing for Basic Specialist Training programme with Royal College Physicians of Ireland in Clinical Education and Research Centre.

Every Monday, Consultant trainers rotate to present to SHOs on various subspecialty topics to enhance clinical skills in general internal medicine.



SAMPLE SCHEDULE

Monday 6th November 2023 @1pm
Microbiology - Patrick Stapleton

Monday 13th November 2023 @ 1pm
Nephrology - Dr Liam Casserly

Monday 20th November 2023 @ 1pm
Nephrology - Prof Austin Stack

Monday 27th November 2023 @ 1pm
Cardiology - Dr Cormac O'Connor

Trainees working in Ennis, St John's and Nenagh Hospitals get an option to dial in to these teachings via Webex platform.



The teachings are organised by RCPI coordinator and are well attended by trainees. It is a vital part of BST training in ULHG.

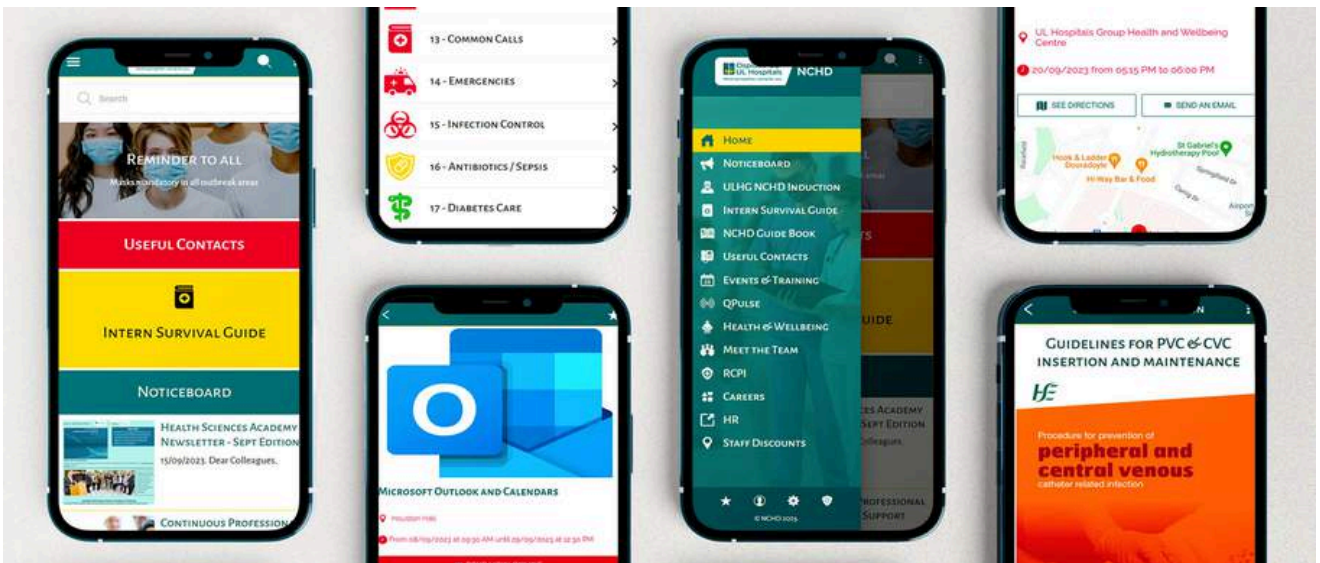
National NCHD Conference



In November, Dr Mc Manus, Verity Hayes & Mairead de Brun attended the 2023 National Healthcare Workforce Conference with speakers including Minister Stephen Donnelly & Professor Brian Kinirons talking on the Impact of HSE Health Regions.

Award Winning UL Hospitals NCHD App

Health Sciences Academy team members, Mairead de Brun and Verity Hayes, with NCHD Training Lead, Dr John McManus and NCHD Dr Niall Nagle, were shortlisted for the HSE Excellence Award in 2023. They proudly accepted a recognition award from Prof Colette Cowan, CEO UL Hospitals Group. Their submission focused on the impact of the NCHD app. Well done to everyone who was involved!



5. Communications

The Health Sciences Academy (HSA) has made significant strides in developing and implementing a comprehensive communications strategy to engage stakeholders, promote key initiatives, and share important news and events. Effective communication is crucial for building awareness, fostering collaborations, and showcasing the achievements of the HSA and its partners.

Key highlights of the communications efforts include:

1. Communications Strategy & Plan

A comprehensive Communications Strategy & Plan, incorporating stakeholders, is now in place and operational, ensuring a coordinated approach to communications activities.

2. Media Coverage

Mid-West Regional media outlets, such as Live 95FM, Limerick Leader Live, Limerick Post, and I Love Limerick, have provided coverage of HSA initiatives, including the STEMI video and the 2023 ULHG NCHD Conference, helping to raise public awareness and engage the community.



Communications cont...

3. Health Sciences Academy Newsletter

The establishment of a monthly Health Sciences Academy Newsletter, with the first issue sent in September 2023, provides a regular channel for sharing news, updates, and success stories with stakeholders and the wider community.

4. HSE Excellence Awards 2023

The ULHG NCHD App was submitted for the HSE Excellence Awards 2023 in the Engaging a Digital Solution Category, showcasing the innovative work being done within the HSA.

The app was shortlisted, and a presentation was delivered to the judging panel on 05/10/2023, further highlighting the HSA's commitment to excellence and innovation.

The ULHG NCHD App was ultimately 'highly commended' in its category, recognizing the significant impact and potential of this digital solution.

5. Design and Social Media

The implementation of the design tool Canva across the team has enhanced the visual appeal and effectiveness of communications materials.

Regular social media posting, three to five times per week, as per the Communications Content Calendar, ensures a consistent and engaging presence on platforms, sharing relevant news from HSA, NDTP, RCPI, ULHG, and HSE.

6. Stakeholder Engagement

News and upcoming events promoting key stakeholders, including NDTP, HSA, SPARK Fusion calls for funding, research, and UL Postgraduate courses/Micro Creds, are regularly submitted to ULHG & MW Community Communications for inclusion in Team Talk Slides, Pulse Newsletter, and Weekly Upcoming Training & Events, ensuring wide dissemination and engagement.

By implementing a strategic and multi-faceted approach to communications, the HSA has effectively engaged stakeholders, promoted its initiatives, and demonstrated its commitment to excellence and innovation in the healthcare sector. The ongoing efforts to share news, celebrate successes, and collaborate with partners will continue to strengthen the HSA's reputation and impact in the region and beyond.

Include awards in this section too maybe or at the beginning?

- HSA Shortlisted for 3 awards in the Irish Healthcare Awards:
 - o Student Programme- Early Careers TY event
 - o Children's Programme- Care Aware Crew

Communications cont...

HSA winner in Irish Healthcare Awards:

o Equality, Culture, Diversity & Inclusion – Equality & Inclusion steering committee and associate activities

- Poster accepted in Spark Innovation Conference- showcasing Care Aware Crew video
- NCHD App shortlisted for HSE Excellence awards with presentation delivered 05/10/2023
- NCHD App ‘highly commended’ in HSE Excellence awards

www.HealthSciencesAcademy.ie

Health Sciences Academy Newsletter

Bringing together research, innovation and clinical practice

Issue 7 | October 2023





WELCOME

Welcome to the October edition of the Health Sciences Academy newsletter. Each month, we will share updates in the key areas of education, research and innovation.

University of Limerick / UL Hospitals Launch Simulation Lab



The team that participated in the official launch of the CERC Simulation Lab included (from left): Dr Alan Watts, Consultant in Emergency Medicine, ULHG & Associate Professor, UL School of Medicine (SoM), Mary-Beth Brown (SoM Y2); Jasmine Blenkins-D'Callaghan (SoM Y3); Connor Pines (SoM Y2); Eoin Donnellan (SoM Y3); Jazari Puckett (SoM Y3); Dr Ammar Ahmed (CSTEM3); and Josef Abraham (SoM Y3)

University of Limerick and UL Hospitals Group have officially launched a new simulation facility at University Hospital Limerick providing undergraduate and postgraduate doctors, nurses and allied health professionals with simulation training in a range of clinical procedures.

The Simulation Lab has a wide variety of equipment in its simulation-based education and training programmes, including full-body manikins and task trainers (adult, paediatric and maternity).

In addition to regular teaching, several other events have been hosted in the Simulation Lab since the summer of 2022, including advanced cardiac life support (ACLS), clinical induction training for Interns, Interprofessional education teaching with health sciences students, MRCPJ examinations, organ donation education, basic ECHO training, and Adult Critical Care Transport training. [Click here for full details.](#)

Basic Laparoscopic Skills Course

The first 'Basic Laparoscopic Skills' course was held in Clinical Skills Room 1, Simulation Lab, CERC on 29th September 2023. This day-long, hands-on course was designed for doctors starting their training in laparoscopic surgery. Expert laparoscopic Consultants guided the trainees through the principles of ergonomics and practice in laparoscopic set-up. Through suturing practice, the trainees improved their instrument-handing and depth of perception skills. Each person performed a laparoscopic cholecystectomy and appendectomy using synthetic models. The event was kindly sponsored by the NDTP and lunch was sponsored by Medtronic.






If you have any queries about the UL/ULHG Simulation Lab please contact Dr Sarah Carroll, Senior Simulation Technician, Sarah.Carroll@ul.ie

www.ul.ie/hsa

Health Sciences Academy Newsletter

Bringing together research, innovation and clinical practice


Issue 8 | November 2023

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Healthcare Professionals Speaker Series at University of Limerick Open Days



Verity Hayes, Miriam McCarthy and Laura Ginty, Health Sciences Academy with Healthcare Guest Speakers. Secondary school Students attending one of the Healthcare Speaker Series Talks, at UL Open Days 19-20 October 2023. Maura Fitzgerald with Speakers from Nursing & Midwifery, Public Health Nursing & Occupational Therapy.

For the first time, the Health Sciences Academy took part in the 'UL Open Days' on Thursday the 19th and Friday 20th October at the Health Sciences Building, University of Limerick. It was a great success. Over 600 secondary school students came to hear from Healthcare Professionals across UL Hospitals Group and Midwest Community Healthcare, on their career journey and 'A Day in the Life'. After each speaker, students had an opportunity to ask questions and speak directly with the Health Care Professionals at our HSA stand. Staff from the following disciplines across UL Hospitals and Mid West Community Healthcare presented: Nursing, Public Health Nursing, Midwifery, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Medicine, GP Scheme, Clinical Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy and Dietetics. We express our gratitude to all the Healthcare Professionals who contributed to the success of this speaker series and look forward to continuing collaborations for future Junior Health Sciences Academy events. [Click here for further information](#)

Register Today for Change Management: Embracing Cultural Inclusivity
Equality & Inclusion Conference 8th November 2023



Programme Schedule	
Opening Address	10:00
Change Management	10:45
Equality and Inclusion	11:30
Cultural Inclusivity Panel	13:30
Wellbeing Workshop	15:00
Closing Address	16:00
Programme concludes	16:30

[Click here to view the Speakers](#)

www.ul.ie/hsa

Health Sciences Academy,
Clinical Education Research Centre,
University Limerick Hospital Group,
Limerick.