



Mercy University Hospital Awarded Prestigious National Safety Award



Mercy University Hospital Awarded Prestigious National Safety Award from the National Irish Safety Organisation (NISO).



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Mercy University Hospital (MUH) are delighted to have been awarded a prestigious national safety award from the National Irish Safety Organisation (NISO).

Winning a NISO award demonstrates the positive and proactive culture of safety management that exists within MUH and highlights the invaluable collaborative effort achieved by the MUH Health and Safety Committee/Sub Working Groups and Safety Representatives under the Chairmanship of Damian Harrington, Health & Safety Officer.

This was the first time MUH has entered for this Award and were one of over 2,500 entries. The MUH Health and Safety Policy demonstrates a very clear commitment to achieving excellence in occupational safety and health management and supporting an environment and culture where health and safety at work is a prime consideration for all MUH Patients and Staff.

Congratulations to everyone involved.

Clinical Audit Day

We had a very successful 3rd Clinical Audit and Quality Improvement Day in the Mercy University Hospital on 30th September. The day celebrates and recognises all the excellent work done in maintaining and improving services across the hospital. An impressive 49 projects were submitted varying from Clinical Audit, Patient Centred Care, Improvement to Services and the Use of Resources.



The event is organised annually by **Dr. Kieran O'Connor** (Clinical Director), **Maria Connolly** (Quality and Risk Manager), **Janice Cregan** (Risk Manager), **Maria O'Keeffe** (PA to Clinical Director) & **Cassie Willis** (Administrative Assistant). This year due to Covid19 restrictions the day ran part virtually with staff's projects shown in poster format on the media system in the drawing room with an audio dialog outlining the project and findings.



We were also delighted to welcome back the previous winners of the Sr. Laurentia perpetual award for the overall

achievement of excellence at this event to discuss their winning projects and how they have progressed.

Anne O'Keeffe (Advanced Nurse Practitioner) ED - Presenting 2019 Winning Poster Title: Patient Empowerment: a Key Enabler to Improve Patient Experience of Hospital Discharge.

James O'Connor (Specialist Medical Scientist) Microbiology Dept – Presenting 2020 winning poster Title: Implementation of Molecular Testing for SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19).



This year we also had the pleasure of welcoming two keynote speakers to the 2021 Clinical Audit and Quality Improvement Day:

Dr. Orla Healy, (National Clinical Director Quality and Patient Safety & Adjunct Clinical Professor) who discussed the National Quality and Patient Safety Directorate and **Ms Olivia Wall**, (Occupational Therapy Practice Tutor) who discussed her

reflections about working in quality improvement.



Thank you to you both for coming to the Mercy University Hospital and sharing your knowledge/experience in Quality improvement.

We wish to express our enormous gratitude to our judges of this year's Clinical Audit & Quality Improvement Day. We acknowledge the time and effort put in to review all **49** abstracts/posters in advance of the day and the difficult task of choosing a winner.

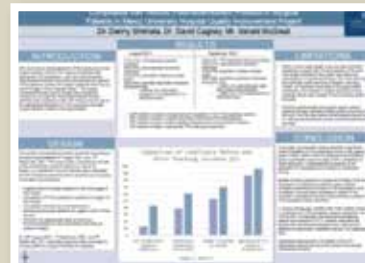
The Clinical Audit & Quality Improvement Day Honour Board was also unveiled at the 2021 event by Sandra Daly (CEO) and Dr. Kieran O'Connor (Clinical Director).

The Prize Winners for the 2021 Annual Mercy University Hospital Clinical Audit & Quality Improvement Day were as follows:



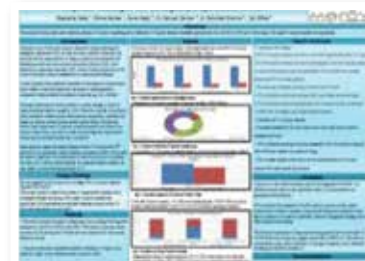
OVERALL WINNER - SR LAURENTIA AWARD FOR OVERALL ACHIEVEMENT OF EXCELLENCE

Project 30: **Compliance with Venous Thromboembolism Protocol Amongst Surgical Patients in Mercy University Hospital** - Danny Shehata, David Cagney, Mr Gerald McGreal – Vascular Surgery Department.



IMPROVED USE OF RESOURCES

Project 33: **Troponin Testing in the Emergency Department in MUH** - Stephanie Yates, Eithne Barden, Anne Healy, Samuel Dairiam, Abhishek Sharma. Biochemistry and Emergency Department.



BEST CLINICAL AUDIT CATEGORY

Project 20: **Using the AMAU pathway as an alternative to the “admission-to-investigate” pathway** - José María Martínez Ávila, James Ryan, Hannah O’Sullivan, Síofra Bennett, Abbey Murphy, Medical. Conor Martin, Medical - Acute Medical Assessment Unit.



IMPROVING PATIENT EXPERIENCE

Project 29: **Troponin Testing in the Emergency Department in MUH** - The Introduction of Inflammatory Bowel Disease Preconception and Pregnancy Education Clinics.



IMPROVEMENT IN EFFECTIVE CARE & SUPPORT CATEGORY

Project 41: **Severe Asthma Clinic: Improving patients outcomes** - Bernie O Connor, Ciaran Halleran, Maeve Dennehy, David Curran, Terry O Connor - Respiratory Department.



Foundation Features

Facebook Fundraising

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has forced many of our usual fundraising events to go online. In January, we kicked off the first of three “Facebook Challenges” which have raised over **€144,000** for the Mercy Cancer Appeal.

The challenges gave individuals the chance to take on a virtual challenge for a month while also connecting with others through a special Facebook group where they could encourage one another along the way.

We would like to say a huge thank you to all those who took part, including the many Mercy staff members who joined in the challenges throughout 2021.

Keep an eye on the Mercy Hospital Foundation Facebook page for more challenges in 2022.



Absolute Airsoft Charity Game



On Sunday, October 17th, over 212 people came out in force at Absolute Airsoft, Cork to take part in a charity airsoft game for Make Your Mark on Cancer. An incredible **€11,410** was raised on the day, which brings the total amount raised through the annual charity game to over **€35,210**.

The fundraiser was organised by Absolute Airsoft Cork, along with the help of Eoin and Damien Prendergast, founders of the annual Make Your Mark on Cancer charity walk in memory of their brother, Mark, who lost his battle with testicular cancer in June 2012.

Since 2013, the Make Your Mark on Cancer charity walk has raised over **€350,000** for the Mercy Cancer CARE Centre. The 22km walk from The Viaduct to the Town Hall in Bandon was postponed in 2021 but promises to be back in 2022.

Mercy Christmas Cards

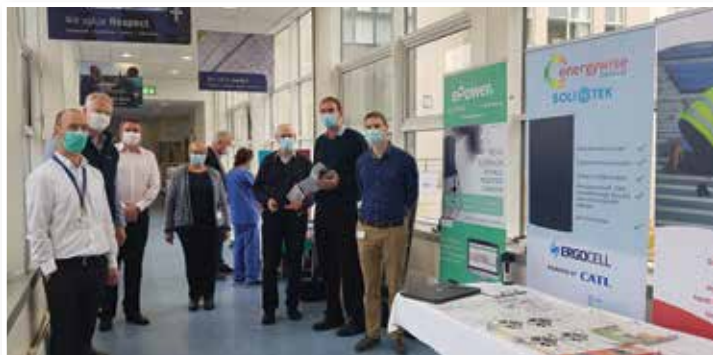
Mercy Foundation Christmas Cards are now available for 2021.

Our full range of festive season cards for 2021 are available to view on our website. Cards can be purchased online at www.mercyhospitalfoundation.ie or from the Hospital Shop.



Greenway57

Promoting and supporting Hospital wide sustainability efforts



The goal of Greenway57 is to enable Mercy University Hospital (MUH) in becoming more resource and energy efficient, prevent/reduce waste and endeavor to create a more sustainable environment for patients and staff of the Hospital. By reducing our environmental impact through improved services and educational programs we enable our patients and staff to live and acknowledge the importance of a healthier environment. Greenway57 is underpinned by the Mission and Values of Mercy University Hospital.



Greenway57 was originally launched in January 2020 but due to the onset of Covid19, all activities were suspended. The Team regrouped in April 2021, on World Earth Day and began implementing its Action Plan. To date the Team have introduced a waste streaming bin (on trial) for eventual roll out across the Hospital campus, replaced disposable cups in the canteen with new reusable, recyclable 2Go Cups and were delighted to host their first Sustainability Day and welcome SEAI, Aramark Energy (OPW), ePower and Energywise on site to provide advice and information for staff on energy savings at home, on the road and at work.



Education around Greenway57 is ongoing and there is a dedicated email address on the MUH global email system, to enhance and enable communication on projects, initiatives and to get feedback.

The Greenway57 Team is multidisciplinary team with a shared passion to progress sustainability initiatives across MUH.



- Catering Department- Brendan Brosnan
- Consultant Body – Dr. Donall O’Croinin
- Department of Nursing – Maggie Walsh
- Household Services – Tracey Dinneen
- Patient Liaison Officer - TBC
- Procurement – Karen Gleeson
- Technical Services Department – Micheal O’Shea
- Values & Culture Lead – Siobhán Kenny (Chair)

The next stage for Greenway57 plan is to recruit staff across every Department to become Green Champions, under the banner “It Starts with MErCy”.

Hospital Watch Launch

Mercy University Hospital (MUH) were delighted to officially launch the newly revised Hospital Watch Programme on September 13th.

Hospital Watch is a proactive crime prevention programme in hospital settings, similar to a residential Neighbourhood Watch scheme and operates as a partnership between An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive, Mercy University Hospital (MUH) staff, patients and visitors with the aim of preventing crime within the hospital setting. Sandra Daly, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Mercy University Hospital (MUH) together with Chief Superintendent Barry McPolin launched the initiative.

In her welcoming remarks to invited guests, MUH CEO Sandra Daly commented that “a day such as today is very exciting for Mercy University Hospital as we are building up and strengthening our partnership with An Garda Síochána to support our hospital in preventing crime. The safety of our patients, and our staff, is paramount and we would be failing in our duty of care to both if we

didn't seek to address this complex issue in a values based, multi agency, and collaborative fashion. As a hospital, we are 100% committed to this programme led by the Hospital Watch Working Group and the roll out of this programme has already had a positive effect for our service users and our staff”. Ms. Daly further acknowledged the “valuable engagement and collegiality afforded by An Garda Síochána.”

Chief Superintendent Barry McPolin lauded the Hospital Watch programme as “a crime prevention programme which embodies the principles of partnership, problem solving, engagement and crime prevention.”

MUH Community Garda, Peter O’Riordan and Crime Prevention Officer, Sergeant Brian McSweeney facilitated information sessions across the hospital throughout the day.



In Profile: Meet Maggie Walsh

Assistant Director of Nursing - Decontamination/Hygiene

Maggie Walsh commenced in May 2021, in the role of Assistant Director of Nursing with responsibility for Decontamination/Hygiene.

Maggie joins Mercy University Hospital (MUH) with in excess of 32 years experience in healthcare including over 30 years experience working in the peri-operative area, 15 years experience in Decontamination and 5 years experience in Hygiene and Infection Prevention and Control. Her previous roles include both management and leadership and she has just completed a Masters in Healthcare Leadership.

The main purpose and priority for Maggie will be to provide guidance on all aspects of Hygiene and Decontamination within the hospital and is currently working on a number of Quality Improvement Projects related to this field, including the implementation of Adenosine Triphosphate (ATP) testing for satellite Decontamination areas, a review of cleaning products used in MUH to streamline same and the provision of a robust Hygiene education programme for staff. This is currently available for Healthcare Assistants, Household Attendants, Cleaning and Portering staff and will be open to all staff in 2022. Maggie also works with the Infection Prevention & Control Team in a wide variety of areas.

Maggie is available for advice or support on all matters related to Hygiene and Decontamination and can be contacted via email mwalsh@muh.ie



A New Day - Anna Higgins

Mercy Times was delighted to have the opportunity to chat with Anna Higgins about her brand new role at Mercy University Hospital (MUH) as Clinical Projects Facilitator.



“Many of you will know me as the Physiotherapy Manager however since May I have commenced a new role as clinical projects facilitator for the MUH. This role is new to the MUH so it is an exciting venture developing the service over the coming year.

The need for this position arose primarily due to the advancement of integrated services as part of the Slaintecare implementation plan. New service models are being developed in the community to manage patients, as close to home and at the lowest level of complexity possible. While a portion of patients can be managed by this new model many will still require the services offered by the acute hospital. In order to facilitate a seamless transition between community care and acute hospital care integrated services are being

developed initially for a number of specified conditions. These conditions include COPD/Asthma, Diabetes, Heart Failure and services for the older person. This program is known as “Enhanced Community Care”.

The reform program aims to enhance community services and redesign acute hospital pathways to support older people and those with specified chronic diseases. One of these initiatives is the development of community based hubs on the north side and south side of Cork city. These hubs will serve a population of approximately 150,000 people. The hubs will be staffed by Medical, Nursing and Health and Social Care professionals and will offer GP’s access to multidisciplinary assessment and treatment programmes. The goal of this reform programme is to reduce acute hospital out-patient waiting lists and reduce emergency department attendances by managing appropriate patients in the community setting.

Integration between MUH and the community is integral to the successful development of these community based hubs. My primary role is to act as a liaison engaging with staff in the MUH and the community to develop pathways and processes for the transition of patients between the acute hospitals and the community hubs.

Within the hospital I am also working on developing some new clinical services that align with the vision of the MUH campus development strategy. My role is to assist with developing a concept into a business proposal which involves meeting with many different people across the hospital from Consultants, Nursing, Health & Social Care Professionals (HSCP) staff, Procurement, technical services, and HR to name a few. The expertise of each discrete area is required to ensure a successful proposal is drafted. This has been an enjoyable process as the staff of the Mercy has many innovative ideas that require a little assistance to develop into concrete proposals.

Over the last few months I have gained new insight into the activity of the wide variety of services within the organisation – it has been a really positive eye-opener for me. I would like to thank everyone who has helped me, and answered what must have felt like endless queries, over the past few months while I have been navigating these new waters!”

Technical Services Department – Hospital Projects Update



In early October MUH CEO Sandra Daly and Acting Technical Services Officer Shane O'Donnell presented to staff an overview of the multitude of projects that have been undertaken in recent times, those that are currently in progress and a high level perspective on the hospital's approach to its capital investment programmes.

The multitude of projects being undertaken is creating considerable physical change to the Hospital campus. The joint presentation focussed on:

- How infrastructural risks are being addressed in an evidence based way and formalising a forward looking cycle of planned preventative works.
- The preparation of an integrated development plan to ensure that public expenditure in the form of capital grants given to the Mercy provides value for money.
- Key capital projects approved under Covid-19 legislation incorporating a wide range of major and minor capital works
- The ambitious infrastructural and clinical development plan for MUH (Campus Study) published in early 2020 – “A Plan for the Delivery of Expanded Clinical Services and Facilities at MUH (and Distillery Fields) Cork”, which is available to view on the hospital's website, www.muh.ie

Mercy University Hospital continues to advocate not only for investment in our own hospital but also for strategic investment in healthcare in Cork. The hospital will continue to develop a pioneering healthcare campus scheme, enabling optimum utilisation of site capacity and most importantly, facilitating the delivery of quality and effective patient care pathways between a network of providers.

CEO Sandra Daly stated that *“it is wonderful to see “the Mercy” going from strength to strength. All these developments will ensure that as the 21st century progresses, MUH will continue to serve the people of Cork and beyond in a responsive and safe manner, with healthcare facilities that deliver safe, effective care to those who need it most”.*

Poster boards showcasing the various projects were available for staff to view and the Technical Services Team were on hand to answer questions.



Mercy Moments

As the temperatures begin to drop, summer seems a distant memory



Mercury Rising

Freddie's Ice Cream Van was on site not once but twice during the summer as the heat wave hit and the mercury began to rise and staff were able to stay "chilled" with a range of Ice cream cones, tubs etc.

Rebel Yell

The success of the Cork Senior Hurling Team in the All Ireland Hurling Championship provided a much welcome boost for the Rebel County in August. To mark the occasion, staff across the hospital went "Red for Cork". MUH had another reason to wish the Rebels all the best as Sean O'Donoghue's mother, Yvonne O'Donoghue, is a much valued member of our Nursing team.

And the winners are

Hot on the heels of the "Spring has Sprung" Photo Competition came the "Sizzling Summer" Photo Competition. Once again the response was phenomenal with over 70 photos submitted from staff members across all disciplines. The photos were displayed across the Link Bridge and voted on by hospital staff and patients.

Congratulations to our winners:



1st Place
Dr. Derek Hennessy
(Consultant Urologist)



2nd Place
Allen Moore
(Catering Officer)



3rd Place
Marian Laverty
(Haemovigilance Officer)

Mercy Week Celebrations

September 24th is a very important date in the Mercy diary as it was on this date in 1827, the foundress of the Mercy Order, Catherine McAuley dedicated the first house of Mercy (on Baggot Street) thus bringing to life The Mercy Way. We, together with our wider Mercy family, dedicate this time to celebrating “being Mercy” – honouring the past, present and future and affording us, as a healthcare provider, the opportunity to reflect on our Vision, Mission and Values.



MUH Executive Management Team receiving the Paintings from Sr. Judy Dinneen

Presentation of 8 “All Cork” Paintings

On Tuesday, September 21st, Mercy University Hospital paid tribute to Sr. Judy Dinneen who presented the hospital with 8 “All Cork Paintings” as part of its Mercy Week celebrations. The Paintings are a collection of iconic Cork locations and were painted to raise much needed funds for the mission in Peru where Sr. Judy devoted much of her own life.

Blessing of Stained Glass Window – Venerable Catherine McAuley

At Mercy Day Mass, celebrated on September 22nd, in Mercy University Hospital (MUH), Bishop Fintan Gavin blessed a new art installation in the Hospital Chapel. The new addition to the Chapel is a specially commissioned Stained Glass Window depicting Venerable Catherine McAuley incorporating one of her most notable messages of hope – “We should be shining lamps, giving light to all around us”



Bishop Gavin blessing the new Stained Glass Window



Lifetime Achievement

The MUH Lifetime Achievement Award is awarded to honour and recognize the contributions over the whole career of an MUH staff member, at the core of which the Mercy Values of Compassion, Excellence, Respect, Justice and Team Spirit are exemplified.

This year the award was conferred on **Patient Liaison Officer, Josephine Griffin** and a special presentation was made at Mercy Day Mass

Long Service Pins

Mercy University Hospital was delighted to acknowledge seven members of staff for reaching 40 years of service. A special presentation was made at Mercy Day Mass to:

Frances Galway, Claire O'Herlihy, Cynthia Smiddy, Louise Williams Liz Lavers, Noreen Brickley and Catherine Woods



Liz Lavers



Louise Williams



Frances Galway



Claire O'Herlihy



Cynthia Smiddy



Catherine Woods

A total of **5** staff were acknowledged for 30 year service whilst **55** members of staff received Long Service Pins for 20 year service, with **15** members of staff receiving Pins for 10 years of service.



Congratulations

New Graduate Transition Programme



Graduate nurse attrition is a significant international problem, evidenced in Ireland, United Kingdom, United States, Canada and Australia. With increasing complexity of acute care settings, high patient acuity and demanding workloads, new graduate nurses require greater levels of support. Ensuring the successful transition of new graduate nurses in busy acute care settings is critical to ensure a safe and competent workforce. Consequently, the Centre of pilot Graduate Transition Programme in 2019 for new nurse graduates to support their transition from student to staff nurse. This innovative programme is offered to new nurse graduates of the Mercy University Hospital, (MUH) South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital, Mallow General Hospital and Bantry General Hospital. The New Graduate Transition Programme is an accredited programme with the Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland (35 CEU's). Now in its third year, the programme is hugely successful in providing new nurse graduates with the skills, competences and knowledge and peer support essential in the transition from student to staff Nurse, while also enhancing recruitment and retention.

The CNE, in collaboration with the Nurse Practice Development Unit (NPDU) MUH, facilitate the New Graduate Transition programme with support from nursing and allied health colleagues. Facilitated over 12 months, the programme offers new graduates post graduate training and education, providing both theory and workshops in Respiratory care; Medical and Surgical nursing; Recognition and Management of the deteriorating Patient and a Professional Development day. The New Graduate Programme also encompasses Acute Life-threatening Events: Recognition and Treatment (ALERT) day, an interdisciplinary education programme which is unique to Cork and led out by the CNE, MUH in collaboration with the NPDU. The Centre for Learning and Development, St James Hospital, Dublin is the only other education provider of the ALERT Programme in Ireland.

Programme evaluations conducted at the conclusion of each day of the New Graduate Transition programme and at the completion of the year long programme are extremely positive. The CNE will commence in a research study entitled The Effectiveness of an Educational Intervention for New Graduate Nurses Transitioning from Student to Staff Nurse commencing November 2021 following achievement of ethical approval from Cork Research Ethics Committee (CREC).

#Wellbeing – The Mercy Way



MUH Employee Wellbeing Week (#Wellbeing, The Mercy Way) commenced on Monday 11th October with an array of fun and engaging events and lots of treats for staff on offer daily. The date was chosen in line with World Mental Health day which fell on October 10th.

The following were some of the highlights of the week:

- Musical Recital in the Glass Room for staff to drop by and enjoy.
- Dinky Donuts provided free donuts for staff across the entire campus and proved to be one of the highlights of the week!
- Back by popular demand was the “Squat Hold Challenge”, organised by the MUH Physiotherapy Department. Congratulations to the team from CCU/ Cardiology Department for taking the title this year.
- Clinical Nurse Specialist Paul Ahern presented on Men's Health with a particular focus on prostate and testicular health.
- There were “time out” sessions for staff with Chair Massages or a Hand and Foot Treatment.
- The MUH Dietetics Department were available all week with important and helpful information for everyone and the MUH Catering Department provided Treats across the week.
- Staff were also invited to take an inspirational quote from the Mindfulness Tree on display.



Sr Concepta Twomey: A Tribute



It was with great sadness, on May 21st, that staff of Mercy University Hospital learned of the death of Sr. M. Concepta Twomey.

Sr Concepta joined Religious Life with the Sisters of Mercy, St Maries of the Isle, Cork in 1954. She was born in Knocksahering, Kilnamartyra, Macroom, Co Cork. Her parents were Michael and Nora Twomey and she was one of six girls, Breda, Máire, Gobnait, Noreen and Sr Rita R.S.M. Following her secondary education, she trained in nursing in St Finbarr's Hospital in Cork.

Sr Concepta had a distinguished career in nursing, education and health care in the

Mercy University Hospital. She worked as a Ward Sister in St. Anthony's in the early 1970s and in the Catherine McAuley School of Nursing for 2 years with Sr. Anthony Mary as Principal Nurse Tutor.

During the 1970's, Sr Concepta travelled to Peru for a period of time and served in the Cork Mission in Trujillo, a position she really enjoyed and contributed to hugely for a number of years. She returned from Peru in the early 1980's and was in charge of the Nurses Home and Staff Canteen at Mercy Hospital. She was then selected as Ward Sister in St. Catherine's Ward (Female Surgical) for two years, ensuring the provision of optimum and evidenced based care.

In 1986 she transferred to the Catherine McAuley School of Nursing when she was appointed as the Principal Nurse Tutor, where she trained future nurses for more than a decade. Sr Concepta sought to inspire self-assurance and confidence in student nurses in her classrooms. She regaled and captured nursing students' complete attention with tales of her vast nursing experiences. She was admired by her students and esteemed by her colleagues. Sr Concepta was involved in the progression of the apprentice model of nursing training to diploma level. She was instrumental in the negotiations and in the curriculum development as undergraduate nursing progressed to degree status with University College Cork in 2000.

In her later years, Sr Concepta served as Sacristan in the Mercy University Hospital Chapel with great dedication. She returned to live in St Maries of the Isle in 2018, a place where she was very happy and content. She loved reading, sewing, going for a Sunday drive with her community and she especially enjoyed visiting Griffin Garden Centre with the Sisters. She was very talented at flower arranging, evidenced in the beautiful and colorful flower arrangements in the chapel at the Mercy University Hospital.

In all her ministries, she was single minded in her commitment and service to the care of the sick. She was utterly committed to religious life and gave expression to that with unstinting generosity and faithfulness. Her trust in God's care saw her through many challenges.

Sr Concepta died on 21st May 2021, following a short illness. She is survived by her sisters Máire, Gobnait, Sr Rita, her niece Siobhan Roche, Night Duty CNM2, her adored and adoring nieces and nephews. She is warmly remembered by the Sisters of Mercy, friends, colleagues, and former nursing students of Mercy University Hospital. She is buried in St James' Cemetery, Chetwynd.

*Ar dheis Dé go raibh
a hAnam Dóilís*

We Remember.....

The Annual Remembrance Mass to honour all who have died in our hospital during the last three months of 2020 and the first nine months of 2021 was streamed live, on November 21st, for families and loved ones to share in.

A dedicated Remembrance Tree was placed on the Altar of the Hospital Chapel and the names of the deceased were placed on it for the month of November. The names of all who died during this period were read out by twelve members of staff to honour each individually.

They walk beside us every day, unseen, unheard but always near. Still love, still missed and very dear.



Research Corner

Mercy Times is delighted to welcome a new contributor to our publication, Dr. Evelyn Flanagan who will keep us informed of developments and innovations in Research at MUH.

Funding success for the UCC HRB Clinical Research Facility Cork



The Health Research Board (HRB) has recently announced that it is to provide €5.3m in funding to the Clinical Research Facility UCC, a HRB centre supporting clinical trials to improve health and care. This allocation has been matched with a further €5.9m from University College Cork (UCC) and partners in the South/Southwest Hospital Group (SSWHG).

Located at the Mercy Hospital and Cork University Hospital, led by Professor Joe Eustace, and hosted by University College Cork, the Clinical Research Facility UCC was founded in 2010 and has conducted 154 clinical trials in its latest five-year funding cycle alone. These trials have supported studies that have directly led to market authorisation and licencing for eleven new drugs including treatments for asthma, cystic fibrosis, allergies and renal disease.

Sitting at the interface between UCC and the SSWHG the Clinical Research Facility UCC supports 70 investigators who conduct patient-focussed clinical research.

Embedded within UCC's College of Medicine and Health and chaired by Head of College Prof Helen Whelton, Clinical Research Facility UCC is currently conducting three national-leading research projects on Covid-19. The HRB's funding comes following a stringent international review process which assessed Clinical Research Facility UCC's work to date.

Welcoming the funding announcement Prof Joe Eustace, Director of Clinical Research Facility UCC said: 'The renewed funding of the Clinical Research Facility UCC, announced by the HRB today, will allow us to continue to integrate the expertise and resources of the University and its affiliated hospitals in order to conduct impactful clinical trials across diverse disease areas, including in the treatment of Covid-19. One of our core goals over the next 5 years of funding will be develop direct patient involvement at all levels in the planning and conduct of our research'.

Mercy Researcher Profile – Dr Liz Moloney



Evelyn met with Dr. Liz Moloney, who has worked as a Clinical Research Fellow in the HRB Clinical Research Facility since July 2020, to chat about her work and share with Mercy Times. Dr. Moloney is a dual graduate in dentistry and medicine (UCC) and completed Higher Specialist Training in Geriatric and General Internal Medicine in July 2021.

"Currently, I am undertaking MD studies exploring the use of frailty screening

tools among older adults in emergency departments (ED), under the supervision of Dr Rónán O'Caoimh and Professor Suzanne Timmons, Department of Geriatric Medicine. An increasing amount of international evidence has shown that earlier identification of frail, older adults in ED can lead to more targeted specialist geriatric medicine input at the entry point to acute care. This can improve patient outcomes including reduced length of stay, lower unscheduled readmission rates and lower mortality. I have gained skills in completing a systematic review and have just finished an international consensus of frailty experts on the ideal components of a frailty screening tool for use in ED. A major aim of my research is to trial this new frailty tool in the Mercy University Hospital ED. If successful, I would hope that the new frailty tool could be piloted nationally and beyond, as many European emergency departments utilise a similar triage system to Ireland.

My MD work has also explored frailty education strategies among ED staff and challenges to education delivery in ED environments. ED staff are pivotal to providing high quality care to older adults in hospitals and their support and interest in my frailty research here in the Mercy must be warmly acknowledged."

SPARK Innovation

I was fortunate to be the recipient of two SPARK Innovation bursaries in 2020 for my work with the Frailty Intervention Therapy (FIT) team in the Mercy Hospital emergency department, an excellent "front door" frailty team that screens all adults aged over 65 years for frailty syndromes. With that funding, we launched a collaborative SPARK Innovation/Mercy HSCP project in May 2021, entitled "Ageing Well in your Community, advice to age well at home". The aim was to empower older adults to regain confidence and function as COVID-19 restrictions lifted. I am delighted that this frailty project has also been shortlisted for the upcoming 2021 Irish Healthcare awards.

Encouragement

I am keen to encourage others to become involved in research in the Mercy University Hospital as I have found my own MD experience very positive and I have a great research team supporting me here in MUH. My supervisors have been excellent, always accessible and engaged with my work. The CRF-C has been very supportive and I am very grateful to have access to such a high calibre research facility on my doorstep. Breeda Herlihy in the Mercy library is an unsung hero of researchers, we are so lucky to have her skill and expertise on site. By undertaking dedicated research, I have gained opportunities I would otherwise have missed in my clinical job: from data analysis and writing skills, to establishing research links with international frailty colleagues and working more closely with my HSCP colleagues on positive ageing projects. The prospect of improving clinical care for older adults in EDs through my work has been a great motivation for me. If research opportunities become available to you, I would advise do some.

Research Review

Here's a quick look at some recent publications by MUH staff and their collaborators.

Professor O'Riordain and the Tyndall National Institute are working together on the use of diffuse reflectance spectroscopy in diagnosis of colorectal cancer. Colorectal cancer (CRC) is the third most common type of cancer worldwide and the second most deadly. Recent research efforts have focused on developing non-invasive techniques for CRC detection. The team evaluated the diagnostic capabilities of diffuse reflectance spectroscopy (DRS) for CRC detection accuracy. Diffuse Reflectance Spectroscopy (DRS), is a non-invasive technique that measures the characteristic reflectance spectrum produced as light interacts with a medium. The primary mechanisms are absorption and scattering, both of which vary with wavelength to produce the reflectance spectrum that is recorded. This spectrum contains information about the optical properties and structure of the measured medium. This study utilised *ex vivo* methods on CRC tissue and was the first DRS study to investigate the potential of probing deeper tissue layer using

larger SDD (specific source-to-detector distances) probes for CRC detection in the luminal wall. This study could potentially be used to develop a probe for CRC detection during colonoscopy.

Dr Rónán O'Caoimh and his collaborators completed a systematic review and meta-analysis of population level studies from 62 countries on the prevalence of frailty. Frailty is characterised by loss of biological reserves, failure of physiological mechanisms and vulnerability to a range of adverse outcomes. Although distinct from multi-morbidity, frailty overlaps with disability and chronic disease, potentially contributing to rising late-life dependency in many countries. As such, frailty is recognised as an emerging public health priority. Despite the importance of frailty in the context of global ageing, the worldwide population-level prevalence remains unclear. The group conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis of population-based studies reporting the prevalence of frailty and pre-frailty published since the development of established frailty models, examining sources of heterogeneity. The study provides the best available estimates of population-level frailty and pre-frailty prevalence according to the two most commonly used approaches to classify frailty (physical frailty and deficit accumulation models), from 62 countries around the world. The results while showing marked variations between countries and territories, reflect the heterogeneous and limited data available with few derived from high-quality, nationally-representative samples. Given the expected ageing of societies around the world, the high prevalence of frailty at population-level should be considered when planning future health and social care policies and services, particularly those targeting prevention and early intervention.

Dr Helen Richards and her collaborations conducted a longitudinal quantitative and nested qualitative study of the psychological responses to COVID-19 in Irish healthcare workers. COVID-19 is an unprecedented occurrence in modern times and individuals who work within healthcare settings, face a broad array of challenges in responding to this worldwide event. Key information on the psychosocial responses of such healthcare workers

(HCWs) in the context of COVID-19 is limited and in particular there is a need for studies that utilise longitudinal methods, an overarching theoretical model, and use of a cohort of participants within a defined geographical area across acute and community settings. Quantitative and qualitative data from this project will help to provide information across 4 time points on the nature of key psychological, social and organisational/environmental factors for HCWs in the context of COVID-19; the utility of the CSM-SR (Common-Sense Model of Self-Regulation) as a frame in which to understand the role of illness threat and coping/support resources on psychological impact factors, and how they may change over time. It may also provide information on what factors in particular, may help to safeguard the well-being of HCWs, and may also contribute to the nature of interventions to help manage the impact on HCWs of such large scale health emergencies in the future.

Further information on the studies mentioned above can be found below.

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Safety First

Security: Going Shopping?

Crime Prevention Officer, Sergeant Brian McSweeney has some important tips to share with Mercy Times regarding online shopping.



In the lead up to Christmas and in particular during Black Friday sales promotion period, An Garda Síochána are supporting Europol's online fraud prevention campaign which encourages safe online shopping by customers and provides fraud prevention advice to online retailers/ eCommerce businesses.

<https://www.europol.europa.eu/activities-services/public-awareness-and-prevention-guides/e-commerce-tips-and-advice-to-avoid-becoming-fraud-victim>

More and more businesses are using the internet as the primary channel to sell goods and services. Whilst convenient for both the consumer and retailer it also presents opportunities for fraudsters who can use the anonymous nature of the internet to rip off consumers or target retailers who do not have the necessary defences in place to protect themselves.

There was a total of €22 million in credit and debit cards fraud losses on Irish consumers in 2020, according to the Banking & Payments Federation Ireland (BPF). Consumers and eCommerce merchants will be particularly active online over the next few weeks and An Garda Síochána and Europol advise consumers and online retailers to adhere to the following online shopping fraud prevention tips:

The Golden Rules of Online Shopping

- Understand risks involved - do some research – use brands and shops that are familiar to you
- Check to ensure the website is genuine - type the address yourself and check the spelling
- Check the seller's reviews and ratings
- Be careful how you pay – always use the websites recommended payment site – if none, use credit cards when purchasing as most cards have strong customer protection policy
- Save all documents related to online purchases
- If you don't make a purchase, don't leave identity or card details behind
- Never send card details by email, text or other messaging methods
- Don't send money to someone you don't know – check first

Additional note: Make arrangements for collection of deliveries. If you are not going to be there ask a neighbour to collect for you. Failing that use a reliable service which can store your parcels (An Post have Parcel Locker and Parcel Motel is another one) and remember to dispose of packaging carefully so as not to inform opportunist criminals of valuable items inside your home.

#BuySafePaySafe

Interagency Response

As part of the Construction Industry Federation Health & Safety Week, a dedicated inter agency safety talk was facilitated for circa 30 attendees, on site at Mercy University Hospital, including staff of Clancy Construction, the site management team of ESS Modular and staff of the MUH Technical Services Department.




Mindful of the level of construction and development underway on the Mercy campus at present, MUH Health & Safety Officer, Damian Harrington led out this initiative with Tom Regan, Health & Safety Officer (Clancy Construction) in collaboration with relevant personnel in ESB Networks and Cork City Fire Department. This proved a hugely positive, and sociable, engagement for all parties.

Ready to Respond

The MUH Hospital Emergency Planning Committee continues to implement and educate staff on the Hospital Major Emergency Plan (HMEP). A series of training sessions were scheduled and facilitated in early November by Cian O'Brien, HSE Emergency Management Officer. This training is critical in the event of a city/county wide major incident.



Fire Safety: Fire Safety Alert Notices

S	SITUATION The purpose of this Fire Safety Alert Notice is to highlight the importance of keeping escape routes, fire exits, fire refuge areas, stair cores and circulation areas free of storage items and obstructions.
L	LOCATION This Fire Safety Alert Notice is applicable to all MUH buildings and occupied areas.
F	FIRE HAZARDS Please see an example of a fire hazard on the escape route against a clear and safe escape route.
	<div data-bbox="236 629 536 1077">  </div> <div data-bbox="560 629 860 1077">  </div> <div data-bbox="911 663 1158 1032">  </div> <div data-bbox="1219 663 1497 1032">  </div>
	<div data-bbox="236 1126 536 1227"> <p>The above exit is blocked which prevents occupants escaping from either side of the door</p> </div> <div data-bbox="560 1126 860 1238"> <p>The escape route is now clear and free of obstruction which can ensure occupants on either side can escape without difficulty.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="884 1149 1505 1205"> <p>These signs have been installed across various locations across the hospital</p> </div>
	<div data-bbox="236 1261 860 1514"> <p>Means of Escape Example To support achieving this objective, a number of new fire notice signs have been installed across the hospital which indicate either 'Fire escape keep clear' or 'This area must be kept clear of obstructions'.</p> <p>These fire notices must be observed at all times by all members of staff.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="884 1261 1505 1323"> <p>New Fire Signage to Assist Staff Members Fire Awareness</p> </div>
R	RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All areas used as fire escape routes, fire exits, fire refuge areas, stair cores and circulation areas must NOT be used for any means of storage or obstructions. All current items are to be cleared immediately by department head / line manager responsible for that area. Ensure that all staff and responsible persons within your area of responsibility are aware of this Fire Safety Alert Notice. Electronic and other communication means can be used to maximise distribution. Display this Alert in a prominent location within each workplace (i.e.: Notice Board / Communication Folder). Ensure all staff are aware of the new fire notice signage and observe these instructions at all times. Contact the MUH Fire Officer, MUH Technical Services Department (TSD) or Operations Director should further information be required. <p>Contact the MUH Fire Officer, MUH Technical Services Department (TSD) or Operations Director should further information be required.</p>
R	REFERENCE MUH FIRE CERTIFICATE; THE FIRE SERVICES ACT 1981 and 2003; and SAFETY HEALTH AND WELFARE AT WORK ACT 2005.

“Make Mercy Real”

MUH Employee Choice Values Award



Congratulations **Peter O’Callaghan – Head of ICT** – winner of the MUH Employee Choice Award for this quarter. Peter was nominated by his peers, under the Value of Excellence for demonstrating exceptional vision and leadership during the recent Cyber attack. Peter acknowledged the outstanding commitment of his Team during this challenging period. As per Covid19 Guidelines, a small ceremony was held to make the presentation to Peter.

There were 25 staff members (including 3 Teams), across all disciplines, nominated by their peers for exemplifying the Mercy Values and Making Mercy Real in their daily working life.

Congratulations

Winner

Peter O’Callaghan (Head of ICT))



Commendations

- Lorraine Cotter (Admissions Office)
- Kevin Buckley (Medical Records)
- Sharon Cheryien (Department of Nursing – St. Patrick’s Ward)
- Craig Clinton (Catering Department)
- Alison Coughlan (Department of Nursing – Theatre)
- Anne Marie Crowley (Administration – Polar Unit)
- Geraldine Crowley (Department of Nursing – Theatre)
- Niall Drew (Technical Services Department – Carpenter)
- Alison Dwyer (Laboratories – Blood Bank)
- Ashley George (Department of Nursing – St. Patrick’s Ward)
- Clodagh Harrington (Department of Nursing – Emergency Department)
- Jovita Lyons (Administration – Medical Secretary)
- Denise McCarthy (Catering Department)
- Dr. Kevin Murphy (Radiology)
- Brigid O’Callaghan (Admissions Office)
- Adrienne O’Driscoll (Occupational Therapy)
- Jessica O’Farrell (Department of Nursing – POLAR Unit)
- Annette O’Regan (Department of Nursing – Emergency Department)
- Martina O’Sullivan & Fiona Lyons (Medical Secretary/ Records Supervisors)
- Vytautas Senutis (Medical Records)
- The PACs Office
- The Salaries Department
- The Stores Team

This peer to peer award moves beyond just rewarding top talent, recognising presence or acknowledging group success and is an inclusive whole-organisation cultural commitment to encourage everyone’s development. The specific focus of this Award is on the MUH Core Values of Respect, Compassion, Excellence, Justice and Team Spirit.

Mulled Wine & Baked Camembert

Lukasz Dabrowski Head Chef

Something cosy for winter nights!

Mulled Wine

INGREDIENTS

- 1 (750 ml) bottle of dry red wine
- 1 orange, sliced into rounds (also peeled, otherwise it would be bitter)
- 8 whole cloves
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 2 star anise
- 3 whole Cardamom
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 to 4 tablespoons sugar, honey, or maple syrup to taste (or your desired sweetener)
- 2 glasses of orange juice (preferably Tropicana)
- *Optional add-in: 1/4 cup brandy (or your favourite liqueur)*
- *Optional garnishes: citrus slices (orange, lemon and/or lime), extra cinnamon sticks, extra star anise*

METHOD

STEP 1

Combine ingredients. Add wine, orange slices, cloves, cinnamon, star anise, cardamom, orange juice, (honey, sugar or maple syrup) and brandy to a large saucepan. Stir briefly to combine.

STEP 2

Simmer. Cook the mulled wine on medium-high heat until it just barely reaches a simmer. (Avoid letting it bubble - you don't want to boil off the alcohol). Reduce heat to low, cover, and let the wine simmer for at least 15 minutes or up to 3 hours.

STEP 3

Strain. Using a fine mesh strainer, remove and discard the orange slices, cloves, cardamom, bay leaves cinnamon sticks, and star anise. Give the mulled wine a taste, and stir in extra sweetener if needed.

STEP 4

Serve. Serve warm in heatproof mugs, topped with your favourite garnishes.



Baked Camembert

INGREDIENTS

- 125g whole camembert cheese
- Fresh thyme springs
- Pinch dried chilli flakes
- 1 Tbsp runny honey
- Handful toasted nuts (pecan, walnuts or pistachio) or use your favourite

METHOD

STEP 1

Preheat oven to 180°C. Un-wrap the cheese and place in the centre of a square of baking paper large enough to fold up over the sides of the cheese, or place the camembert in a ramekin.

STEP 2

Place the wrapped camembert on a baking tray. Score the top of the cheese with a small, sharp knife to prevent it from bursting. Top the camembert with the thyme sprigs and chilli flakes.

STEP 3

On the pan, toast your favourite mixed nuts.

STEP 4

Bake the camembert in the oven for 10-15 minutes. Place on a serving platter. Drizzle the honey over the cheese and scatter over the toasted nuts. Serve with crackers and dried or fresh fruit.

Introducing Edel O'Neill

End of Life Care Coordinator



Mercy Times caught up with Edel O'Neill who has recently been appointed as End of Life Care Co-ordinator, to learn about this new and innovative role for Mercy University Hospital:

"I commenced my role as End of Life Care Coordinator on November 1st with responsibility for continuing the implementation of the Hospice Friendly Hospital Programme Quality Standards for End of Life Care and ensuring end of life care continues to be core and innate in our service to our patients and their families. My aim is to maintain existing good practices within the hospital and identify areas for development to add to the high quality end of life care we give to our patients and families ensuring every person affected by death is cared for with dignity, respect, compassion and understanding."

End of Life Care is a particularly challenging area of work and I am committed to support and empower staff to deliver holistic, compassionate, person centred care to patients and their families at this time. I will endeavour to support staff who have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic in the most difficult of circumstances."

As part of my role I will engage in education and training of staff to further develop our communication around end of life. I will review, advocate and support ongoing quality improvements within the hospital to enhance end of life care and promote excellence and a seamless care pathway for all our patients requiring end of life care in the MUH."

Editorial Team

Mercy Times has a wide audience that is continuing to grow across the health, corporate and political sectors and it is a wonderful opportunity to showcase all that is good and positive about MUH.

Join the Team ... if you have an article, photo, snippet, event ... let us know We are here for you!

Meet your Mercy Times Editorial Team for this Edition



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