



# SAFE Huddles in the Emergency Department



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The Emergency Department (ED) of Mercy University Hospital (MUH) is a dynamic, fast-paced patient-care environment which produces a myriad of challenges to the multidisciplinary team working there. The challenge was increased by the Infection Prevention and Control constraints of the pandemic whereby patients needed to be in isolation cubicles - behind closed doors. As a team, the staff of the MUH ED continually look for ways to improve quality and safety for patients and staff, so when the opportunity arose to work with the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland on the SAFE Collaborative - Situational Awareness for Everyone – they did not have to be asked twice!

The aim of the SAFE huddle is to increase situational awareness in the ED using a SAFE huddle to identify patients at risk of deterioration with a raised INEWS or who were identified as a “watcher” by a member of the team, and to ensure that the concerns of the team were escalated appropriately.

*Text continues on page 2*

### How does it work?

At 10.00hrs each day, staff meet at the white board in ED and identify themselves - e.g. who is the ED consultant on duty? Who is the shift leader? Any patient with an INEWS (Irish National Early Warning Score) of 6 or greater is then identified and the team discuss the clinical details, treatment in progress and its result, and if any further escalation is needed. There is also a check to see if there are any “watchers” - patients who are causing concern to any team member, e.g. patients with vague symptoms but seem to be just “not right” or the Healthcare Assistant has noticed a change in condition while assisting them. Any change that makes someone feel concerned is discussed. Paediatric patients are identified to ensure their care is prioritised; Mental health patients are identified to ensure their safety; equipment issues are identified; and any other safety concerns that anyone has. The intrinsic part of the process is to ensure that something is done about each of the concerns raised.



### Support

Whilst staff were initially sceptical of another huddle they have become familiar with the clinical focus of the SAFE collaborative and understand it is an opportunity to highlight their concerns to senior team members. It is swift - between 5-10 minutes - and all staff are beginning to join in. Staff have reported feeling more supported especially when they are looking after several sick patients and when the department is busy. Communication using the INEWS is now standard throughout the department and underpins all escalation conversations, and improvements in speed of escalation have been noted. Continuous improvement of the huddle is paramount to its success and so the team have started to audit their results for onward communication.

Recognising and highlighting when things go well is hugely important for staff morale and it also offers opportunities to learn, so a “catch of the day” is highlighted where discussion centres on good escalation that is recognised by any member of the team. In equal measure, when escalation hasn’t occurred in the appropriate time frame, the opportunity is taken to see if anything can be learned from it and how steps can be taken to prevent it happening again.

### Greatest Achievement

Overall, the SAFE huddle has been accepted as a place to raise clinical concerns to senior staff. Staff report feeling more supported and feel they have somewhere to report concerns, however small. The team acknowledge this as the greatest achievement yet. Instead of reacting to deterioration, now it is anticipated and escalated, enabling earlier intervention. The situational awareness has improved throughout the department which is ultimately increasing the safety and quality of our care, behind those isolation cubicle closed doors.



### INEWS2

Shona Fitzgerald CNM2, MUH Lead Deteriorating Patient, oversaw the launch of the The Irish National Early Warning System 2 (INEWS2) in MUH on March 21st, 2022. INEWS2 is a system for anticipating, recognising and responding to patient deterioration in acute hospital settings. Education and training to facilitate the changeover is ongoing. The launch was attended by Clinical Director Kieran O’Connor, Director of Nursing Margaret McKiernan, South/South West Hospital Group Lead, Denise McCarthy and members of both medical and nursing staff.

# Celebrating 10 Years of The Mercy Injury Unit (Urgent Care Centre)

*"We experienced friendly, professional, welcoming and efficient care from everyone we dealt with"*

*Patient Feedback*

Mercy University Hospital is delighted to be celebrating a decade of The Mercy Injury Unit (Urgent Care Centre), better known as the Mercy Urgent Care Centre (M-UCC).

## Beginning

The Mercy Urgent Care Centre was set up under reconfiguration of the health services back in 2012 as a local injuries unit which involved the transfer of Nursing, Medical and Physiotherapy staff from the South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital to set up and open a stand alone Injury Unit under the auspices of Mercy University Hospital.

The vision of Mercy University Hospital is to bring essential services to the Northside of the city and give expression to its mission of being a "hospital without walls". Thus, the scope of the Mercy Urgent Care Centre was to receive ambulatory patients with recent injuries that the patient /GP did not consider life or limb threatening, to decrease patients with injuries of a non-life/limb threatening condition attending the Emergency Departments pan city.

## Growth of M-UCC

The age cohort is 10 years and over, and the staffing of the unit was based on seeing and treating 9,000-12,000 patients per annum. In 2019 (pre Covid), patient presentations had reached nearly 19,000, double the expectation of the capacity for the unit.

Over the years, the unit has increased in staffing numbers to manage the increase in patient flow.



All but losing one or two of the existing staff that opened the unit, the same staff remain, with additional staff allocated from the MUH to join the team

The M-UCC Team is clinically led by Dr Gerard McCarthy, Emergency Medicine Consultant CUH, National Clinical Lead Injury Units and Emergency Medicine Programme, Senior Nurses, Doctors Advanced Physiotherapy Practitioner, with a specific interest in the acute management of Musculoskeletal injuries and Fractures, Senior Physiotherapists, Radiographers, Reception Staff, Healthcare Assistants, Security and Noonans Cleaning Contractors.

All staff regularly undergo Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to maintain their Musculoskeletal (MSK) skills and treatment management up to date and everyone in the Unit have very strong links with intrahospital Multi-Disciplinary Team speciality teams.

## One of Many

The M-UCC, is one of 11 other Injury Units in the country and sees the

highest patient presentations. M-UCC was the first Injury unit in Cork City and county to be set up followed by Mallow Injury Unit and Bantry Injury Unit

A full range of the services offered are available on our website:

[www.muh.ie/index.php/for-patients/urgent-care-centre](http://www.muh.ie/index.php/for-patients/urgent-care-centre).

Operational hours are 08.00-18.00 (on site till 20.00), 7 days a week and the Unit is based in St Mary's Health Campus, Gurranabraher, T23YV52.

CNM3 Nuala Coughlan acknowledged this milestone birthday – *"I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Mercy University Hospital for their vision and support in setting up what is one of the most successful and functioning Injury Units in the country. Of course, a unit is only as good as the team, and I cannot express enough the enormous pride I have working as one of the team of extremely dedicated, diligent, and professional staff. Our work ethos is reflected positively by our patient satisfaction comments and the retention of staff within our unit"*

**So Happy 10th birthday M-UCC, and here's to many more successful years of patient centred care ahead!**

# Integrated Care – Community Healthcare Network

**Dr Keith McGrath welcomed Mercy Times to the newly opened Community Health Network Hub located in the Northside of the City.**

**The oldest living person at time of writing is Kane Tanaka from Japan at 119 years young. Officially, the oldest person in Ireland is Elizabeth Heaney from County Down at 107 years. While many of us will not achieve such venerable maturity, there is no doubt that more and more of us are routinely living longer and longer.**

## Life Expectancy

“The HSE Capacity Review 2018 projected an increase of 59% in the number of people over 65y and an increase of 95% in the number of people over 85y. We know from the Central Statistics Office that most people in Ireland rate their own health as either good or very good. The Institute of Public Health tells us that life expectancy of someone at the age of 65y is increasing, as is the amount of that time expected to be disability-free. Studies repeatedly show that in general, we experience greater happiness as we get older, and that people live longer when they are happy.

However, we also know that as we get older, there can be an accumulation of conditions that we live with and an intensification in the complexity of their interactions.

## Health Optimisation

To meet this growing encumbrance and to improve and optimise the health and well-being of older people so that we can continue to enjoy the benefits of a longer, active life, the Integrated Care Programme for Older Persons (ICPOP) has developed a concept requiring a complete change in how health and social care is delivered nationwide. In line with HSE and Sláintecare national policy, ICPOP aims to provide the right care in the right place at the right time. With this in mind, 96 Community Healthcare Networks (CHNs) have been established across the country - 14 of which are in Cork and Kerry.

## Integrated Care

Each CHN will focus on the specific needs of the population encompassed with an integration of care across all sectors and involving multi-disciplinary teams from primary care, mental health, chronic disease, disabilities, social care, and the acute sector. Alongside the Enhanced Community Care programme, ICPOP will sponsor an Ambulatory Specialist Care Hub for specialist care for older people that will serve CHNs with a total population of about 150,000 people.

The Hub for North Cork is located on St Mary's Health Campus, and we look after older people who live in CHN 7, 8, 9. We will provide a single point of access and streamlining of care pathways for older people with frailty and complex healthcare needs. Our multi-disciplinary team will provide specialist assessment,

diagnostics, early appropriate interventions, and care planning to improve quality of life and support people to live well in their own homes and communities.

## Team Vision

Our team will consist of operational team lead, administration staff, clinical nurse manager, advanced nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialists, senior and assistant physiotherapists, senior and assistant occupational therapists, medical social worker, speech and language therapist, dietitian, and geriatrician. Services offered will include comprehensive geriatric assessment, case management, and links with Frailty at Front Door teams and Outreach team (rehabilitation at home), and signposts to living well supports. We will have links with local voluntary and community support services. We will aim to reduce the number of older people being admitted to the Emergency Department and reduce the number of days they spend in hospital when they are admitted.

While we may not all reach the impressive ages of Kane Tanaka or Elizabeth Heaney, the team in the Ambulatory Specialist Care Hub will work together to improve the health and wellbeing of older people living north of the Lee and shift the focus of healthcare from the acute sector to more planned, co-ordinated, community-based care. Right care, right time, right place.”



L-R - Fiona Walsh (Administration), Deborah Curtin (CNM2), Agnieszka Kulesza (Physiotherapy assistant) Kay Cronin (Operational lead), Mary Hayes (Administration) and Dr Keith McGrath (Geriatrician)



## Reflection

*Five non-physical traits of beauty:*

- *Generosity*
- *Authenticity*
- *Active Listening*
- *Self-Awareness*
- *Respectful Honesty*

Vex King

## Building Mercy!

The multitude of projects underway at present at Mercy University Hospital (MUH) are creating a considerable physical change to our Campus. MUH has not seen capital investment of this scale since the Lee View Block was constructed in the mid 90's and the Technical Services Department (TSD) are excited to play their part in the provision of a modern-day healthcare facility that will enable optimum utilisation of site capacity and most importantly facilitate the delivery of quality and effective patient care pathways for the community we serve. The Team have recently updated Mercy Times on what is happening .....

In the last number of weeks, the scaffolding has been removed to reveal the new **Radiology Building** which will be operational imminently.

Attention is now firmly fixed on progressing the new **Ward Block** and **Operating Theatre building**. This development will include the provision of 30 additional inpatient beds across level 2 and 3 of MUH and two new "state of the art" operating theatres on level 4 of the new building. The size and scale of the development is becoming more evident every day and the development of these new Theatres and additional bed capacity will help alleviate the ever-growing demands placed on the hospital, will be of great benefit to our patients and support the wider healthcare needs of the people of Cork.

Construction works are at an advanced stage on site with the structure complete and the building now substantially weathertight. Internal fitout across all floors is progressing at pace and final completion date is scheduled for the latter end of 2022. The new development will link back into the existing hospital buildings at two locations per floor with six tie-in locations in total.



# Age Friendly Health System

The **Mercy Frailty Intervention Team** is leading the way in making sure that every day, every older adult receives age-friendly healthcare. As part of the Age-Friendly Health Systems movement, we are among the first teams in the country to become an Age-Friendly Health System Participant. All older adults deserve safe, high-quality healthcare that is based on what matters most to them as individuals and delivered reliably in every setting.



The four essential elements of an Age-Friendly Health System are known as the 4Ms:

**What Matters:** Know and align care with each older adult's specific health outcome goals and care preferences including, but not limited to, end-of-life care, and across settings of care.

**Medication:** If medication is necessary, use Age-Friendly medication that does not interfere with What Matters to the older adult, Mobility, or Mentation across settings of care.

**Mentation:** Prevent, identify, treat, and manage dementia, depression, and delirium across settings of care.

**Mobility:** Ensure that older adults move safely every day in order to maintain function and do What Matters. You can learn more in the Guide to Using the 4Ms in the Care of Older Adults

This is included as part of our standard assessment by the frailty intervention team on any adult over the age of 65 coming to the Mercy Emergency Department who are identified as frail. We hope to assist all teams in the hospital with becoming an age friendly team in the future. Please contact **Dearbhla Burke at [dburke@muh.ie](mailto:dburke@muh.ie)** with any questions or for further information.



# Launch of 1st Medication Safety Bulletin at MUH

**Safety matters with medication!**



Back Row – L-R: Rebecca MacSweeney and Jennifer Haugh  
Front Row – L-R: Derina Byrne and Carol Hunter

Medications are the most commonly used intervention in healthcare, and they play an essential role in treating illness and preventing disease. In Mercy University Hospital (MUH), there are approximately 1,600 different medicines available with a typical patient being prescribed an average of 13 different medications during their hospital stay! Thus, the safe use of medicines at all stages – from prescribing, dispensing and administration – is vitally important to ensure the best possible patient outcomes.

In 2017, the World Health Organisation recognised the importance of safe and effective medication use when it identified its third global patient safety challenge - Medication without Harm - with its focus on improving medication safety. That same year, the Medication Safety Working Group (MSWG) was established in MUH. It is a multidisciplinary team with members representing Medical, Nursing, Pharmacy and Quality & Risk with a collective aim of promoting best practices in medication safety to ensure safe and effective medication use.

As part of the programme of work, the MSWG recently launched the 1st Medication Safety Bulletin. This bulletin provides important information about medication safety initiatives in MUH and gives the team the opportunity to share experiences and best practices.

Always Think **Safety** when it comes to **Medication!**

# Meet the Team| The Occupational Therapy Department

**On May 1st the Occupational Therapy (OT) department in the Mercy University Hospital (MUH) will celebrate its 21st Birthday.**



Established in 2002 the Department has grown from two members of staff to eleven. This reflects a recognition of the contribution that OT make to patient care in MUH. OT Manager, James Deasy spoke to Mercy Times about the person centered care delivered to both in-patients and out-patients.

*"Our philosophy is to set goals collaboratively with our patients and to use meaningful occupation as a medium to help them to resume the lives they had before encountering illness and disability. We are primarily interested in helping people to engage in the occupations that make up everyday life. In most cases, the main goal of our in-patients is to return home and live as independently as possible. Typically, we facilitate our in-patients to do this by helping them return to baseline function in self-care occupations such as washing and dressing, toileting, meal preparation, mobility and transfers and community living skills.*

*We employ specialist skills to help people to engage in occupation. These include but are not limited to, seating and pressure care assessment, assessment of cognition and visual perception, assessment of hand function and splinting, assessment of the home environment and knowledge and expertise in the assessment for and provision of adapted aids and appliances.*

*We treat the whole person. This means we are concerned with the persons physical, cognitive, social and psychological functioning as well as the contexts their occupations occur in, be that in hospital, at home, the community or in a residential facility.*

*Our work on the acute wards centres on assessing function and cognition, assisting patients to return to their baseline function, helping patients to source aids and appliances, facilitating safe discharge to home and linking with community services for follow up post discharge. This work is carried out by staff grade and senior OTs.*

*We also work in a number of specialist areas within MUH. Each of these areas has a Senior OT in place. These include care of the older adult, the stroke unit, the Frailty Intervention Team (FIT) in the emergency department, St Francis Unit (SFU) and most recently in the intensive care unit (ICU) where we have set up a dedicated .5WTE senior OT post.*

*Our senior OTs also work in out-patients in the Prosthetic, Orthotic, Limb Absence and Rehabilitation (POLAR) unit with amputees. We also provide a limited neurology out-patient service. Later this year we will have a new 1.0 WTE senior post OT beginning in the regional specialist memory clinic (RSMC). This out-patient post in the RSMC is part of a new service development in MUH, which aims to provide an enhanced assessment service for patients with complex or uncertain presentations of dementia.*

*Each of the senior OTs in these specialist areas and the staff grade OTs on the acute wards employ elements of their own unique skill sets but the underlying philosophy and core of practice remains the same; that is the use of meaningful occupation to help people to live the best lives they can."*

# In Profile | Ronan Spring

Ronan Spring commenced his role as Medical Physics Expert (MPE) in May 2020, joining Mercy with more than 16 years' experience as a Medical Physicist in a Hospital setting and a broad expertise which includes Radiation Protection, Diagnostic Radiology and Nuclear Medicine. Ronan is a graduate scientist with a BSc in Applied Physics and Electronics and an MSc in Medical Physics, who has worked in many different areas of Radiology healthcare managing and delivering services pertaining to Medical Physics in Radiology. Mercy Times met Ronan to learn more about his role and his work ....



"As a profession, Medical Physics is the application of physics to healthcare; using physics for patient imaging, measurement and treatment. The Mission Statement of the healthcare profession "Medical Physicist Expert" states:

*"Medical Physicist Experts will contribute to maintaining and improving the quality, safety and cost effectiveness of healthcare services through patient-oriented activities requiring expert action, involvement or advice regarding the specification, selection, acceptance testing, commissioning, quality assurance/control and optimised clinical use of medical radiological devices and regarding patient risks and protection from associated ionising radiations including radiation protection, installation design and surveillance and the prevention of unintended or accidental exposures; all activities will be based on current best evidence or own scientific research when the available evidence is not sufficient. The scope includes risks to volunteers in biomedical research, carers and comforters."*

The statement above illustrates the role of the MPE. The main purpose and priority for me is to provide guidance on all aspects of Patient Radiation Safety in line with statute SI256 (2018) for which the Health Information Quality Authority (HIQA) is the regulator.

Since arriving I have worked on a number of new Projects related to this field, including the installation/ commissioning of four new Digital

Mobile X-Ray machines, new digital image receptors for patient image capture in the Emergency Department and Polar unit, installation/ commissioning of a new dose calibrator in Nuclear Medicine for patient dosimetry, calibration of AEC chambers to reflect new DR technology as well as the installation/ commissioning of the new Digital X-Ray machine in the Mercy Urgent Care Centre. All systems pertaining to radiation use on the service user must undergo a comprehensive Quality Assurance assessment to ensure that the performance meets the criteria of acceptability as set by relevant guidelines to ensure safe use on our patients."

Ronan sits on the Radiation Safety Committee and the Radiation Safety Action Group within MUH which governs all aspects pertaining to Radiation Safety requirements to ensure compliance with the regulators, EPA-ORP and HIQA per statutes SI30 and SI256. He is also involved in the Radiation Safety Training program of staff within the Mercy and is available for advice on all matters related to Patient Radiation Safety and Medical Radiological Equipment and can be contacted via email [rspring@muh.ie](mailto:rspring@muh.ie)

# Foundation Features

## Wall of Gratitude

For many of our donors, fundraising gives them the chance to give back to the Mercy or to remember a loved one. Our new 'Wall of Gratitude' gives them the opportunity to do both.

Situated in the new St. Therese's Oncology Day Unit in the Lee Road Clinic, the 'Wall of Gratitude' has been created to honour and remember those who have received treatment and care at the Mercy University Hospital.

The wall will be decorated with bespoke 'Mercy Butterflies' which have been carefully created by Cork ceramic artist Siobhain Steele. Each butterfly will be carefully embossed with the name of a loved one or family to be remembered and recognised.



Gene and Margaret Prendergast with their 'Mercy Butterfly' in memory of their son, Mark.

One of the first butterflies to be created remembers Mark Prendergast who passed away in 2012 from testicular cancer. The popular 'Make Your Mark on Cancer' charity walk was set up in his memory and has since raised close to **€350,000** for the Mercy Cancer Appeal. Speaking about commemorating his brother, Eoin Prendergast said *"The Wall of Gratitude has given us another opportunity as a family to remember Mark and reflect on how much has been achieved in his honour."*



POONS nurses, Olga & Peg.



Calvin Mulryan, one of the many patients that benefits from POONS.

## Home-based treatment for youngest patients

One of the many services that our incredible donors help to support is the Mercy Hospitals unique Paediatric Oncology Outreach Nursing Service (POONS).

POONS enables our incredible oncology nurses, Peg O' Riordan and Olga Buckley to deliver treatment and care to children with cancer in the comfort of their own home.

Calvin is one of the many patients who has benefitted from POONS. According to his mom, Emma, *"Olga and Peg came every week which was fantastic, especially if Calvin wasn't up to a hospital visit. They kept us out of the hospital environment during Covid. Even though he loved the Mercy nurses on the ward, Calvin was his usual bubbly bright self when he saw Peg and Olga arriving."*

See Shared Care Update from ANP Olga Buckley on Page 18.



# Mercy Moments

## The Mercy Social Club

The Mercy Social Club had a busy time creating a very "Mercy Christmas" across the hospital for patients and staff. The Deck the Doors Competition created a winter wonderland across the hospital.

### Congratulations to the worthy winners:

**Overall Winner (The Billy Ruben Award)**  
**Human Resource Department**

#### Non – Clinical Area (Offices, etc)

**1st Place – Pharmacy**  
2nd Place – Dietetics  
3rd Place – Catering

#### Clinical Area (Wards, etc)

**1st Place – St Anne's Ward**  
2nd Place – St Oliver's Endoscopy  
3rd Place – St Bernadette's

#### Satellites (off site – Lancaster Hall, St. Thérèse's, etc)

**1st Place – Bed Management**  
2nd Place – Procurement Department  
3rd Place – OPD Central Appointments Office

Other Events included Festive Jumper & Socks Day each Friday, a candle-lit Advent Reflection Service in the Hospital Chapel, outdoor Carol Singers and a very generous donation from the Kinsale Lions Club and the Late Late Toy Show to our Children's Ward.

Our dedicated Mercy Giving Box returned and was very generously contributed to by staff and distributed onwards by the MUH Social Work Team.



## Awareness of the Need!

Staff across Mercy University Hospital have been supporting various charitable initiatives for the delivery of humanitarian aid to the people of Ukraine. The Laboratory Staff hosted a coffee morning on March 4th in aid of the endeavours of the Irish Red Cross and successfully raised €1,620.

## Managing People Skills Programme

Congratulations to the latest Mercy Managers and Leaders who have completed the Managing People Skills Programme. This programme is completed across 4 sessions comprising modules with vital skills, tools and techniques underpinned by the Mercy Values of Respect, Excellence, Compassion, Justice and Team Spirit.



## Nursing Graduation

Congratulations to our Nursing Graduates – Mercy University Hospital hosted a special celebration to honour the MUH Nurse Graduates of 2021. “Graduation isn’t the end of a tough journey; it’s the beginning of a beautiful one ...” Let the journey continue!

## Transition Year (TY) Programme

Mercy University Hospital were delighted to reinstate the TY programme this year after two years “on hold” due to Covid restrictions. This year will see 21 TY students facilitated over three weeks from different secondary schools across Cork.

The programme is varied and provides a broad experience for students on hospital life. As part of the programme, on the first day the students will receive talks from the various disciplines in the hospital i.e., Physiotherapy, Speech & Language, Occupational Therapy, Nursing, Medicine, Infection Control and Pharmacy. Emergency Department Advanced Nurse Practitioner Anne O’Keeffe delivers a valuable talk on First Aid and minor injuries and students will also experience the functions of a Ward, observe ward activity, take notes, and provide feedback later. They will also have the opportunity to accompany some of our Clinical Nurse Specialists and observe their role in the hospital.

Hopefully the students experience may enlighten them in their career choice in the future!





## Bowel Cancer Awareness Month – April 2022

Did you know that 90% of Bowel Cancers are cureable if found early. Bowel screening can detect changes in the bowel before they become a cancer, where there are no symptoms and when it is easier to treat.

The month of April is Bowel Cancer Awareness Month and Consultant Gastroenterologist Dr Jane McCarthy and CNS Bowelscreen Neasa Walsh are actively promoting and encouraging people aged 60-69 who do not have bowel symptoms to avail of the free Bowel Screening service. For further information or to check your details are on the register visit **BowelScreen.ie** or **Freephone 1800 45 45 55**. This test is free and a home test kit will be sent to your home and it only takes a few minutes.

**Symptoms of Bowel Cancer** include change in your bowel habit, bleeding, persistent abdominal discomfort/pain, a lump in your abdomen, unexplained weight loss, fatigue. If you have concerns or bowel symptoms contact your GP immediately.

## Pause to Remember

On March 18th, the **National Day of Remembrance and Recognition**, Mercy University Hospital paused to reflect and honour all those we lost during this pandemic, acknowledge our exceptional caregivers, and give thanks for the support of our loved ones and wider community. A special Mass was celebrated in the Hospital Chapel on March 16th in memory of all who have died with COVID19 and in recognition of the continuous work of all our colleagues during the COVID19 pandemic.

A candle was lit and placed alongside flowers on entry into the hospital to acknowledge this National Day of Remembrance and Recognition and messages of support from the public to staff were put on display in a dedicated area, for reflection, in the Chapel.



# Research Corner – Introducing the HOLISTICS Project

**The importance of end user input in medical device design and development.**



Dr Evelyn Flanagan shares exciting news about the HOLISTICS Project.

“IT and digital technologies increasingly connect all healthcare sectors, and data analytics merge “In Vitro Diagnostics” (IVD) and imaging data of patients with data from individuals’ smart wearable personal sensors. This convergence creates new opportunities and challenges. To enable Ireland to play a leading role in this emerging wearable healthcare space, the HOLISTICS project created an Irish MedTech eco-system, an industry-led, disruptive Smart Wearables Value Chain that focused on delivering innovative wearable technologies and product prototypes. HOLISTICS has successfully connected Irish-based companies in the Medtech, Sports Science, ICT and Engineering sectors with leading Irish RPOs to exploit state-of-the-art hardware, software, data analytics and visualization technologies.

The HOLISTICS project, the first MedTec holistic eco-system in Ireland had a remit to deliver end-to-end HealthTech prototype solutions, the project facilitated collaboration

among industry partners as well as researchers. By sharing expertise, a diverse range of partners collaborated on prototypes that has enabled breakthroughs to next generation personalised healthcare platforms and services. The ecosystem focused Respiration Monitoring, Cardiovascular Monitoring, Infection Control and Sports Rehabilitation. Collaboration amongst partners was a pre-requisite to HOLISTIC’s success. HOLISTICS has thus enabled Irish healthcare industry partners to accelerate the creation of a range of disruptive and innovative human-centric wearable healthtech prototypes. The project includes eight industry partners as well as Tyndall, the co-ordinator, HRB CRF at MUH UCC Insight and UCC Lero. HOLISTICS’s technical focus was the applied use of emerging human-centric intelligent sensors, wireless on-body communication and medically validated assessments to support new products and services in the areas of Health and Wellness.

HOLISTICS exemplifies a successful collaboration between MUH staff, industry and research engineers at all stages: from identification of a need

through to device development and implementation in clinical practice. It demonstrates the benefits of building a multidisciplinary team from project initiation through to prototype assessment. MUH staff (clinical and ICT) have played a central role in the project. Key contributions included

- identifying the community of end users, e.g. clinicians, clinical staff, patients etc.
- informing design from the varied user perspectives, e.g. needs and motivations and
- considering barriers to adoption in terms of both ease of use (design) but also in terms of disruption to hospital practice and processes.

This input has ensured the development of prototypes that are clinically relevant and efficient and truly resonate with patients and staff. MUH staff have played a central role ensuring the incorporation of real clinical needs and objectives into prototypes, through to conducting clinical assessments in advance of disruptive technologies transitioning to formal product development.”

# Happy Retirement



Mary Sheehan



Deirdre Rafferty



Pat O'Donoghue

During 2021, Mercy University Hospital bade farewell to fourteen colleagues who set off on the next stage of their life's adventure .....

As Covid19 prevailed for much of 2021, colleagues and friends found novel ways to ensure their cherished and valued team members were honored for their commitment and dedication to not only their chosen discipline but to Mercy throughout their working lives.

*May the best of happiness, honour and fortune keep with you all as you are wished a very Happy Retirement.*



Catherine Woods

# Safe and Sound

## Security Tip

This edition's security tip has a double message, from Sergeant Brian McSweeney, focused on:

- Burglaries, and
- The unauthorized taking of Vehicles (Cars and Motorbikes)

## Did you know!

In the Cork City Garda Division in **January 2022** there were 42 incidents reported of the unauthorised taking of MPVs (mechanically propelled vehicles) of which 22 were motorcycles and 6 motorcycle scooters. Some of these, especially motorbikes, are being stolen while parked on public streets but Motorcars are being taken from outside people houses following a burglary of that home.

Many people are not locking or checking that their cars and their homes are locked at night before they go to bed. In one week alone in March there were **8 Burglaries** within Cork City and in **6 of the cases the Burglar entered**

**an unlocked door at the dwelling.** Then in turn the keys of vehicles are left on a table in full view of the culprit and the cars (in 2 Burglaries) were stolen from the property. The burglaries are occurring in the early hours of the morning.



We are seeing many cases especially in large housing estates where the culprits are moving through the different driveways and checking car doors for the ones left unlocked and they are stealing property.

I quote Lucius Annaeus Seneca a Roman Philosopher when he said **"He who does not prevent a crime when he can, encourages it"**.

**I ask people to ENSURE they lock their cars and homes each night.**

## PARK SMART SECURE YOUR VEHICLE

ALMOST €2 MILLION WORTH OF ITEMS WERE STOLEN FROM VEHICLES IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2020

ITEMS MOST COMMONLY STOLEN FROM VEHICLES:








TOOK



**37%** of all thefts from vehicles are at Residential Locations.

12am to 7am is when over half of these thefts occur.

Driveways are the most common place for these thefts.

**63%** of all thefts from vehicles are at Non-Residential Locations.

of these 50% of vehicles were parked on the street and 37% were parked in car parks.

most Non-Residential thefts from vehicles occur during business hours.

### TIPS TO PREVENT THEFT

- ✓ Wherever you park your car or van, take your property with you.
- ✓ Ensure your vehicle is locked, alarmed and parked in a secure, well-lit location.
- ✓ Store your keys safely, away from windows and letterboxes.

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## Motorbike and Scooter Theft Prevention



- Try to park in busy and well lit areas where there is CCTV.
- Always lock your motorcycle using quality accredited locks, securing it to robust street furniture or ground anchors.
- Consider two locks - a chain lock and a disk brake lock.
- Consider installing an alarm, immobiliser and GPS tracker.
- Take all personal belongings with you.
- Cover your motorcycle or scooter when not in use, and if possible keep it in a garage or shed.
- Report all crime to An Garda Síochána.

[www.Garda.ie](http://www.Garda.ie)

## An Garda Síochána Crime Prevention

### IF YOU LOVE IT, LOCK UP AND LIGHT UP.



Simple steps can help protect your home.

Whether you are at home or going out, remember to turn on some lights, use timer switches, lock all doors and windows, use an alarm, store keys away from windows and letter boxes, and don't keep large amounts of cash or jewellery in the house.

Lock Up and Light Up  
as part of An Garda Síochána's Operation Thor.  
[www.garda.ie](http://www.garda.ie)







## TOP 5 BURGLARY PREVENTION TIPS



- 1** Secure all Doors and Windows
- 2** Light up your Home, use timer switches when out
- 3** Store Keys safely and away from windows & letterboxes
- 4** Record details of Valuables and don't keep large Cash amounts at home
- 5** Use your Alarm, even when at home

See [www.garda.ie](http://www.garda.ie) for more information

An Garda Síochána | Supporting Safer Communities 2014

# The journey to going smoke-free.....

**Anna Burns, Tobacco Control Manager/Senior Health Promotion Officer, Health Promotion & Improvement, Health & Wellbeing, Cork-Kerry Community Healthcare, Health Service Executive reflects on the journey of Mercy University Hospital, a year on from introducing its Tobacco free Campus Policy and the work yet to be done!**

**“The Mercy University Hospital went Tobacco-free on National No Smoking Day, February 17th last year. By implementing a Tobacco-free campus policy, we began a process of going tobacco-free in the Mercy and on its wider campus. What this means is that smoking and the use of electronic cigarettes is not permitted anywhere in and around the Mercy hospital that can be considered its campus.**

## Risk Factors

While it is understandable that nicotine addiction needs to be managed while at work for possibly thirteen hours in a day, we needed to highlight, in the policy, that this issue poses many risks to colleagues and patients if allowed to continue. Most people would not know that a smoker takes in only approximately 15% of the smoke available from a cigarette. What is exhaled and what is called “side-stream” smoke escape the smoker. Therefore, 85% goes into the atmosphere. When smoking outside back doors or under windows, it must be understood that lots of that smoke travels back into the building. There is also a concept called “third-hand” smoke; the stuff of particles, that land and stay (for years) on soft-surfaces; that is difficult to remove and that contains carcinogens, as does second and first-hand smoke.

## Support to Quit

Of the 7,000 chemicals in a cigarette, over 60 of them are known carcinogens. Cigarettes are also expensive. It will cost you over €5,000 per year to smoke 20 cigarettes a day currently. It will also cost you your health. Smokers lose, on average, ten to fifteen years of life, as compared to non-smokers. Quality of life is also diminished through smoking. Most smokers, for these reasons, want to quit. Seven out of ten smokers do in fact want to quit, on average. This means that most people who smoke have often tried to quit before and may feel they have failed. We are here to support you in quitting. We can also help you to



manage your nicotine addiction while at work (products are available to help you manage your cravings). Through as little as a 30 second interaction, as a healthcare professional, as a friend or as a colleague, you might save the life of a smoker. How? You might mention to them that you can avail of **free one-to-one support to quit** and will, as a result double your chances of quitting. You might also mention that **nicotine-replacement therapy is free** and available to all staff and patients of the Mercy; that in combination with the one-to-one support available, makes you four times more likely to quit for good (details below of how to refer to the Smoking Cessation Service of the HSE).

## Mercy Ambassador

The Smoking Cessation Service supported upward of thirty Mercy staff members over the last year, since we began this initiative. You may have read **Pauline Ryan's** story in the June 2021 edition of Mercy Times of how and why she quit and how it has changed her life for the better;

*“Quitting smoking has had multiple benefits in my life, and I now have a freedom that I never had before. My decision to quit had many influences, but in terms of timing two factors coincided, firstly MUH becoming a smoke free campus and secondly my own acknowledgment that if I didn't change my behaviour, the damage I have caused would not be reversible. It is one of the best decisions I have ever made, and I still hope that I am not too late.”*

We have seen so many colleagues successfully quit through the free supports available that we feel a reminder about this service is timely and will help others, equally, who might be now ready to quit. A core principle of health promotion is **“making the healthier choice the easier choice”**. By implementing our tobacco-free policy we are doing just that. We should be proud of how far we have come. Of course, it is a journey. We have made a good start on the journey and will keep working towards the goal, that is worthy of us all; of a tobacco-free workplace and by 2025 a tobacco-free society. This is the goal of Tobacco-Free Ireland, HSE. We are certainly doing our part!

## Bursary

In 2021, through the many efforts made by staff and management of the Mercy we received a €4,500 bursary award from Tobacco-Free Ireland, that we gave back to staff, through the Health & Wellbeing Committee. To have our efforts recognised and rewarded is both motivating and welcome!”

# Smoking Cessation Officer at MUH



Jonathan Hannafin will become our new smoking cessation officer here at the Mercy University Hospital. He has recently joined the HSE as a health promotion & improvement officer, with a priority around tobacco.

Jonathan will be running clinics in the hospital on Wednesdays and Thursday for inpatients, out-patients and staff. Jonathan plans to help service users to become tobacco-free using a standard treatment programme, which involves a combination of behavioural support & nicotine replacement therapy.

If you wish to learn more about the free standard treatment programme, nicotine replacement therapy for patients or staff or referral pathways please contact Jonathan by email: [Jonathan.hannafin@hse.ie](mailto:Jonathan.hannafin@hse.ie)

## “Make Mercy Real” MUH Employee Choice Values Award



Employee recognition is defined as the acknowledgment of a company's staff for exemplary performance. The goal of employee recognition in MUH is to reinforce particular behaviours, practices, or activities that result in better performance and positive outcomes for our patients and for each other as a team.

In 2020, MUH introduced a brand new Award Scheme which is an employee owned recognition programme that will offer all MUH staff a way to acknowledge and express appreciation for a colleague who makes a difference in their everyday work life and bring the Mercy Mission and Values to life by demonstrating true service to the hospital.

This award will move beyond just rewarding top talent, recognising presence or acknowledging group success and will instead be an inclusive whole-organisation cultural commitment to encourage everyone's development.

There were **11** staff members (including 1 Team), across all disciplines, nominated by their peers for exemplifying the Mercy Values and Making Mercy Real.

The winner of the Employee Choice Values Award for the first quarter of 2022 is **Maria Larkin** who was nominated

by one of her colleagues under the Value of Respect for consistently striving for high standards of patient care, seeking to achieve the best functional outcomes for her patients whilst advocating for older adults to be heard and respected.

### Commendations

- Paul Ahern (Department of Nursing –Urology Service)
- Dr Gemma Browne (Department of Medicine)
- The Catering Department (Chefs, Bake House, Food Planning & Prep)
- Joanne Crowley (Department of Nursing – Infection Control)
- Sinead Goggin (Administration – Office of the Director of Nursing)
- Sandra Higgins (Administration – Pre-Assessment Clinic)
- Rasif Kamal (Administration – Emergency Department)
- Margo Lynch (Catering Department)
- Ted O'Connor (Technical Services Department)
- Catriona O'Sullivan (Department of Nursing – IBD Service)

*Congratulations*

**Winner**

**Maria Larkin**

(Occupational Therapy)



# Update from Shared Care Centre

**Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP), Oncology Outreach Olga Buckley updated Mercy Times on exciting developments in the Shared Care Centre that will ensure, enable, and enhance even greater care for our youngest patients.**

## New Name

In 2021 the name of the Oncology/Haematology Unit in Mercy University Hospital was renamed Safari Unit. Previously, it had been officially called St Bernadette's Ward and unofficially was called the 'Leukaemia Unit'. It was felt that the new name better reflects and embodies the paediatric theme and cohort of patients who attend the Unit including both haematology and oncology patients and their families.

The lay out of the unit itself did not change and still consists of three ensuite patient/parent rooms, day-care/family room and kitchenette. This Unit is separate to the general paediatric Unit, St Anne's Ward, at Mercy University Hospital. It is managed by CNM1, Noreen Crowley and Dr Clodagh Ryan is the Consultant Haematologist caring for Shared Care patients. The team also consists of staff nurses, two ANP's Oncology Outreach, a Paediatric Registrar, Social Worker, Clinical Psychologist, Dietician, Physiotherapist, Ward Clerk and support staff.

The Mercy Hospital Foundation was delighted to fund vibrant new signage and decor for the unit to help our youngest patients feel more at ease.

Alannah, one of our 2021 Mercy Heroes helped to show off the new look.



## Programme Expansion

In September 2021, twelve nurses working in Paediatrics undertook the Paediatric Chemotherapy /Biotherapy Course online. Eleven of the nurses were based in Mercy University Hospital, Cork and one nurse was based in Galway University Hospital.

This exciting new initiative was the collaboration between APHON (Association of Paediatric Haematology/Oncology Nurses) in US and Mercy University Hospital, Cork. APHON is the main accredited paediatric chemotherapy biotherapy provider course in the US for paediatric nurses.

In 2021, they expanded their education programme to include Australia/New Zealand online. We negotiated continuing this expansion to pilot the first course in Ireland. The course was supported by the Mercy Hospital Foundation and was adapted to reflect the Irish context.

Nurses undertook twelve taught hours virtually by APHON experienced paediatric oncology nurse tutors over four consecutive weeks in three-hour blocks. At the end of the theory course all the nurses completed and passed an online exam. Staff nurses were then supervised doing the practical aspect of administering chemotherapy in Safari Unit by CNM1 or ANP's.

Application to NMBI for Category 1 approval was granted for this course. Highlights of the course included the most up to date knowledge of biotherapy including innovative therapies that are now being used as part of the paediatric protocols including Car T cell therapy and novel treatments that will be the future of paediatric oncology. During the course, we were able to discuss and appreciate the differences between the two healthcare systems in US and Ireland but also found huge similarities in terms of treatments and progress.

## ANP Led Service

The Paediatric Oncology Outreach Nursing Service (POONS) was uplifted to an Advanced Nurse Practice led service. Peg O Riordan and Olga Buckley had previously worked in the service as Clinical Nurse Specialists and further to application both Peg and Olga are now

registered as ANP's and provide this service outreach to the community which has been invaluable during the Covid 19 pandemic to minimise travel and hospital reviews rather the paediatric oncology patient can be assessed at home.

## Exemplar Model

The appointment of two Paediatric Oncology ANP's in Cork is very important for the development of Paediatric Oncology Services in Ireland. It supports the Paediatric Model of Care and Slainte care which essentially promotes expert and specialist care as near to child's home as possible. This service has been recognised as an exemplar for the future and was highlighted in Leading the Way, A national strategy for the Future of Children's in Ireland 2021-2031, p19.

Finally, five staff nurses virtually attended a course 'Foundation Oncology Skills for Paediatric Nurses' run by The Royal Marsden, London.

If you would like any further details of the above information please contact: Olga Buckley, Paediatric Oncology Outreach, Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Mercy University Hospital, Cork, [obuckley@muh.ie](mailto:obuckley@muh.ie).



# Welcoming Brendan Doyle, Chief Financial Officer, Mercy University Hospital

We are delighted to welcome Brendan Doyle to Mercy University Hospital (MUH). Brendan was recently appointed Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for Mercy University Hospital where he will be responsible for managing the financial function of the hospital.

Brendan is an ACA qualified chartered accountant who has been working as a senior financial controller with 15 years' experience in both Europe and across the Caribbean. Brendan spent the last 8 years working for the Digicel Group which operates in 33 markets across the Caribbean, Central America, and Oceania regions. Brendan held a variety of roles in Digicel, most recently Group Senior Capex Financial Controller and Global Insurance Manager. Brendan began his career in PricewaterhouseCoopers, Ireland as a Tax Consultant.

Brendan brings considerable experience to the post of CFO and will be a valuable addition to our management team.



# Cacciatore Chicken

**Lukasz Dabrowski**

**Head Chef**

(You can taste this dish in our Canteen every fourth Tuesday)



## INGREDIENTS

- 1 tbs olive oil
- 4 Chicken Thigh cutlets, skin on (you can use Supremes)
- 1 red onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 tsp chopped rosemary leaves
- 1 red pepper, cut into strips
- 100g Mushrooms
- 1 cup (120g) pitted green olives, halved
- 1 cup (250ml) red wine
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 1 tbs chopped flat-leaf parsley leaves
- 100g smoked streaky rashers diced

## METHOD

Heat oil in a large, deep frypan over medium heat. Pat the chicken dry with paper towel, then season and place, skin-side down, in the pan. Cook for 4 minutes or until skin is golden, then turn and cook for a further 1 minute or until browned. Transfer to a plate.

Return the pan to medium heat with the rashers and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes or until softened. Add the onion, mushroom, garlic and rosemary, then cook for a further 1 minute or until fragrant. Add the peppers, olives and red wine, then cook for 3-4 minutes until the liquid is reduced by half. Add tomato, then return the chicken, skin-side up, to the pan. Bring to a simmer and cook for 12 minutes or until chicken is cooked through.

## 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**



### Cleo Davies:

Cleo is the Personal Assistant to the Operations Director – ext 5671



### Sinead Goggin:

Sinead is the Personal Assistant to the Director of Nursing – ext 5344



### Siobhán Kenny (Editor):

Siobhán is the Values & Culture Lead for MUH – ext 5653



### Colin McKeon

Colin is an ICT Technician – ext 5628

### Our contributors for this edition: Thank you!

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