



## Official Opening of the Roche Building



### **There is more inside...**

- **Celebrating 30 Years of Cardiology**
- **Mercy Week and Mercy Stars**
- **Meet the Team – Social Work**
- **Recognition, Congratulations and Welcomes!**

***“It is great to see this type of infrastructure investment which is contributing to the wellbeing and health of the people of Cork and further afield here in Munster”.***

*Mr. Neil O’Carroll, Chairman, MUH Board of Directors*

On August 21st, Mercy University Hospital was delighted to welcome Minister for Finance, Michael McGrath, TD, to officially open the Roche Building which is home to two wards – St. Camillus and St. Anthony’s and a hybrid Theatre Suite. The Minister was joined by the Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr Kieran McCarthy and many honoured guests including the family of Sr. Laurentia Roche (RIP).

In October 2020, the hospital submitted a proposal to the HSE to combine the existing approved theatre refurbishment and 30 bed modular unit projects into one discrete development to be completed under the Covid-19 Emergency legislation as part of the MUH response to the Covid-19 Emergency. In December 2020, the hospital received capital approval from the National Director of Estates, to proceed with the project and Clancy Construction were appointed as the main contractor for the project and commenced on site on 6th April 2021.

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Clancy Construction have a proven track record in delivering complex healthcare projects and the collaborative approach from all stakeholders was key to the successful delivery of the project. This project has seen the largest capital investment received by the hospital for some time with a project cost including construction, design team fees, equipping, contingency, inflation ex gratia payment and other costs of €22.38m.



The Roche building has given the hospital 30 additional and much needed inpatient beds and 2 new operating theatres, all built to the highest standards and will enable the hospital to continue to deliver quality healthcare to its patients. The new build will enable the hospital to offer robotic surgery, the benefits of which are well known and understood. This investment is strongly linked to sustainability and the hospital's long tradition of excellence in compassionate care, education, and research.

Mr Des Riordan, associate director with Clancy Construction, was previously quoted in the Irish Examiner

as saying it had been *"a massive feat of engineering, logistics, collaboration and meticulous planning from the entire team"* to deliver within an 18-month timeframe (work started in April 2021) while working in a confined space, in a live hospital environment. At the peak of the works, the average number of workers on site was 108.

## The 'Roche' Building

The development is named after the former Matron of Mercy University Hospital, Sr Laurentia Roche, RIP who passed away in St Maries of the Isle Convent on 31st January 2023. Sr Laurentia was the last Matron of the Mercy Hospital, handing over this role to lay Directors of Nursing in June of 2003. CEO, Anne Coyle paid tribute to Sr. Laurentia, *"I did not have the opportunity to meet Sr Laurentia in person, however listening to the multitude of stories about her, I know that countless patients and their families benefited from her leadership, nursing experience, compassion, wisdom and kindness. It is truly fitting that the hospital is able to honour her legacy and ensure she will not be forgotten"*.



# Donation of Crib

Mercy University Hospital were honoured to receive a very special and timely donation. Mercy Patient, Kevin Kilmartin, has been busy putting his amazing woodwork skills to good use and in acknowledgement of the staff and care he has received, Kevin crafted a very thoughtful piece of work – a beautiful new Crib for our new Wards. Thank you, Kevin.



Kevin pictured with Fr. Pat McCarthy and Chaplain, Mary Woods

# Raising Awareness

Multidisciplinary Teams across the Hospital have been marking Awareness Days providing patients and staff with critical information and skills.

## World Alzheimers Day



## Bereaved Children's Awareness Week



# Welcome to The Mercy!

Mercy University Hospital (MUH) was delighted to welcome a number of distinguished visitors on site over the last few months. These visits afforded an opportunity for our staff to meet with members of the HSE Executive and showcase the remarkable work that is undertaken every day for the people we serve.

Discussions focused on strengths and challenges – resourcing, development, and expansion of current and future services, especially services particular to “The Mercy” such as Inclusion Health. CEO, Anne Coyle told Mercy Times, “We leave our visitors with a positive impression of MUH’s pioneering spirit, culture and ethos”.



Mercy University Hospital hosted the HSE National Director for Acute Operations, Prof Mary Day who was joined by the South South West Hospital Group



Mr Damian McCallion, HSE Chief Operations Officer and Dr Colm Henry, HSE Chief Clinical Officer



Mr Bernard Gloster, HSE CEO



Liam Woods, National Director Health Regions Programme

# Florence Nightingale Senior Leadership Scholarship

**Mercy University Hospital is delighted to acknowledge and congratulate MUH Director of Nursing Margaret McKiernan, who was the recipient of a nationally awarded scholarship to participate in a Florence Nightingale Foundation (FNF) Senior Leadership Programme. She completed this programme in September 2023 and attended the graduation ceremony in the FNF London Academy.**

The FNF programmes are created to enable scholars to explore and discover their own leadership style and develop the essential skills to be a courageous leader.

The course is delivered part-time over 18 months, an experienced nursing mentor is allocated to each scholar. The core programme for all leadership scholarships includes:

- Individual scholar assessment.
- Compassionate leadership development programme delivered by the King's Fund (2 days residential).
- Personal Presence and Impact delivered by the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts (3 days).
- Delivery of a Quality Improvement project to promote clinical excellence.
- Bespoke development opportunities chosen by the Scholar
- Invite to the Florence Nightingale Commemorative Service at Westminster Abbey, London in 2025.

Margaret shared with Mercy Times, what this programme meant to her and what it means for the patients and staff of Mercy University Hospital, "Healthcare delivery is complex and the FNF scholarship afforded me the opportunity to understand my influence as a senior leader in my organisation and how to exercise my authority and maximise my impact for the greater benefit of the department of nursing and the wider hospital and hold the space of nursing clearly in the organization I work in.

*I am now a proud member of a global alumni nursing network in which we learn from each other and continue to have*



*the opportunities for connection with healthcare systems, nationally and internationally. I have learnt from and have been humbled by the experience and nursing knowledge of my fellow scholarship recipients and this learning is now reflected in my daily work. My role as Director of Nursing is to hold the space of nursing and ensure the unique contribution nursing makes to every patient encounter as an integral part of the wider multidisciplinary team, is clearly articulated and understood.*

*The Leadership Retreat in Eden Cornwall was one of the highlights of my scholarship. We were afforded an opportunity to engage and explore our leadership roles and our personal sense of authenticity in these roles and how we bring this authenticity and meaning to our work and indeed our lives.*

*The scholarship was also a unique opportunity to carry out a quality improvement project which will contribute to improving clinical care and impacting positively on outcomes for clinical staff and patients' families through more effective communication (using the ISBAR plus tool). The overall aim of the project was to provide and evaluate an evidence-based education programme to improve challenging communication by clinicians with families of patients over the phone."*

# Mercy First!

**Ground-breaking Kidney Stone Surgery Performed for the First Time at Children's Hospital Ireland by Mercy University Hospital Consultant**



In an unprecedented medical collaboration, Mr Derek Hennessey, a Consultant Urologist at Mercy University Hospital, recently visited Children's Hospital Ireland, Crumlin, to perform the nation's first paediatric percutaneous nephrolithotomy (PCNL), marking a momentous milestone in Irish medical history.

Often reserved for adults, this complex procedure removes large or complex kidney stones minimally invasively. Mr Hennessey, renowned for his expertise in kidney stone surgery and research was requested to perform this procedure due to his considerable experience and reputation with the surgery. His decision to lead this ground-breaking operation highlighted the ever-collaborative spirit among Ireland's healthcare institutions and has paved the way for expanded treatment options within paediatric urology in the country.

The operation involved making a small incision in the patient's back to provide direct access to the kidney, followed by the meticulous removal of the kidney stone. Patients undergoing PCNL typically experience a shorter hospital stay and a quicker return to daily activities when compared to other methods of large kidney stone removal, underlining the significance of this option within paediatric care. While the patient is currently in recovery, the operation has been hailed a resounding success, ushering in a new era where advanced urological procedures, once only accessible to adults, are now within reach for the paediatric population in Ireland. Mr Hennessey has been invited back to Children's Hospital Ireland, Crumlin, to perform the surgery again soon.

# Patient First – World Patient Safety Day



Mercy University Hospital recently promoted World Patient Safety Day highlighting the 2024 theme 'Engaging the patient for patient Safety'.

This event was organised by Derina Byrne, Medication Safety Pharmacist, Tracey Dinneen, Patient Liaison Officer, and the Quality & Risk Management Department and recognised the crucial role patients, families and care givers play in the safety of healthcare. Information and educational resources were available on the day supported by a quiz and staff survey. Derina and Tracey were delighted to have many patients and staff interacting with the event and told Mercy Times,

*"As almost 1 in 3 people in Ireland have difficulty accessing and understanding health related information, we focused on 3 key messages:*

- *Your health, your voice – What do I need to know now - What do I need to do next - What can I expect -How will this help me.*
- *We like to introduce ourselves. Feel free to ask me my name #hello my name is ....*
- *Medical words and terms can be difficult. If you don't understand them, feel free to ask me to explain.*

*Patient Safety is a priority at MUH. We all have an important role to play in providing a quality service where the patient fully understands their healthcare needs."*

# Foundation Features

## Mercy Stars

Friday, September 29th saw the return of our Mercy Stars Awards Ceremony. The Awards are a celebration of the staff who deliver the Hospital's care for patients and their families, as well as honoring and recognizing fundraising volunteers. We want to say a huge congratulations to everyone who received an award on the night and thank you – we couldn't do what we do without any of you!

**Clinical Team of the Year:**

**Ward Team of the Year:**

**Support Services Team:**

**Hospital Services Team:**

**Lifetime Achievement Award:**

**Dietetics**

**Emergency Department**

**Catering**

**Bidvest Noonan (Household Services)**

**Peter O'Callaghan (ICT)**



We would also like to thank all hospital and Foundation staff who put in an incredible amount of work to make the night so special.

## Mizen to Malin

Last month an amazing journey began at Mizen Head, as John Fleming and his crew embarked on a remarkable journey – a 24-hour Boat Run, in support of our Cancer Appeal. They reached their destination at Malin Head at 9 am on August 16th, completing the epic voyage ahead of schedule in just 22.5 hours!

We are thrilled to announce that this incredible endeavour has raised an astounding **€110,000!** These funds will play a crucial role in advancing cancer treatments at the Mercy University Hospital, thanks to the dedication of John and the crew.

This journey has not only showcased their incredible resilience but will also go a long way to supporting patients and families experiencing their own journey with cancer in The Mercy. We would like to offer our gratitude and say a huge thank you to John his crew and all those involved in organising and supporting. This was an incredible achievement with an amazing amount raised.



## Echo Women's Mini Marathon

We want to say a huge congratulations to all who participated in the Echo Women's Mini Marathon Day! This iconic event is in its 42nd year. Thank you to all our wonderful walkers and runners on #TeamMercy and special words of thanks to everyone who supported them through donating to our Cancer Appeal. We simply could not do it without your support.

A special thank you to all the Mercy Hospital staff who participated on the day.



## Mercy Hospital Heroes

Mercy Heroes 2023, an inspiring initiative that brings communities together to support Mercy University Hospital Foundation, took place between October 13th and October 20th. Our mission is to make a meaningful impact on the lives of those in need. Funds raised will go to our Teens & Young Adult Appeal to support young patients through the challenges that serious illness brings. Teens & Young Adults require additional services and supports to help them during their treatment. We want our teenagers and young adults to get back to enjoying their lives and fulfilling their hopes and dreams like every young person deserves.

Coffee mornings and Dress Up Days were just some of the ways to be involved. Thanks to everyone who joined us, raised critical funds and made a difference!

# Hospital Watch | MUH Garda Clinic



*Garda Peter O'Riordan with Mercy Staff*

As part of the recent Garda National Community engagement week, Garda Peter O'Riordan facilitated a dedicated MUH Garda Clinic, on site to:

- Sign and stamp any forms (Passports, Drivers Licence Renewals)
- Raise awareness of the many aspects of crime prevention and community safety.
- Empower communities to acquire advice and knowledge that promotes and maintains personal safety and security

This National Community Engagement Week is designed to achieve the collaborative objective of increased community engagement and community reassurance throughout Ireland. Over the course of the week hundreds of communities, from across the country had the opportunity to meet with their local Gardaí and community representatives to discuss matters of importance to them such as crime prevention and security.

### The objectives of the Garda Clinic:

- Allow communities to meet and discuss safety concerns with their community Gardaí and other key stakeholders.
- Promote and inform best safety and security practices - share details on the use of innovation and education to improve community safety.
- Raise awareness of the many aspects of crime prevention and community safety.
- Empower communities to acquire advice and knowledge that promotes and maintains personal safety and security.

# Graduation and Reunion

Mercy University Hospital had two recent celebrations of the Department of Nursing Graduates – 50 years apart!

## Nursing Graduation – Class of ‘23

On November 15th, Nursing students graduated from Mercy University Hospital. To celebrate this wonderful occasion, a Graduation Mass was held in the chapel followed by a reception in the Drawing Room and the new Graduates were joined by their families, hospital staff and academic partners to mark this milestone.

The Mass was celebrated by Fr. Pat McCarthy and music was provided by Ger Gunn and Michael Bradley with participation from the Nursing Graduates throughout the ceremony. The Graduates were also presented with their Mercy Badge and a Hospital Scroll.

## Nursing Reunion – Class of ‘73

Fifty years after they celebrated their Graduation, the Class of 1973 gathered on October 6th to mark the Golden Jubilee of their graduation, for a very special reunion and to remember two of their classmates who have died - Sr. Josephine Walsh and Geraldine Coleman Houlihan (RIP).

*“50 years is a lifetime, and yet the bond and camaraderie we developed then, is as alive as ever today”.*



# Global Community

**Mercy University Hospital is always delighted to have the opportunity to reach across the globe to share, learn and experience.**

## Magnet/Pathway Conference

Director of Nursing, Margaret McKiernan and Assistant Director of Nursing, Martina Hughes recently travelled to Chicago to represent Mercy University Hospital at the Magnet/Pathway Conference held October 9th to 14th. The Magnet/Pathway Conference is held annually and is the largest nursing conference for nurse professionals. It serves as a both a celebration of accomplishment for newly designated Magnet organisations and a showcase for best nursing practices for the Magnet community.

The visit also afforded the opportunity for Margaret and Martina to engage with North-western Medicine Lake Forest Hospital, which is twinned with Mercy University Hospital. Lake Forest Hospital has 114 in-patient beds and 72 outpatient care spaces. They are a three-time Magnet designated hospital and are nationally recognised for efforts to improve quality and patient safety.



Margaret McKiernan and Martina Hughes pictured with Christina Somberg, David Chilicki and Amy Barnard

## Erasmus Programme

The Erasmus Programme is a European funded programme offering university students a possibility of studying abroad in another country for a period of at least 2 months and up to a maximum 12 months.

Following an Erasmus programme agreement between the University of Madrid and our academic partner University College Cork, the Mercy University Hospital welcomed four medical students from Madrid to learn with us on a summer elective in our hospital for July and August 2023.

Our four students Lusinga de Ramon, Fatal Sameen, Laura Melcón and María Ferrández spent one month attached to surgery and one month attached to medicine under the supervision of Prof. Gerald McGreal and Dr Kieran O'Connor respectively. The student placements were coordinated by Dr Nora McCarthy lecturer in medical education, University College Cork.

It was a great opportunity for these students which they very much enjoyed and gained great experience. It was also great opportunity for the hospital and staff to work with students from another country and university.



# Research Corner| Launch of Research Strategy

## Mercy University Hospital – Research Strategy 2023 – 2027

On Thursday September 28th, 2023, the Mercy University Hospital – Research Strategy 2023 – 2027 was officially launched with a reception in the hospital. Clinical Director, Dr Kieran O'Connor and Research Manager, Dr Evelyn Flanagan presented an outline of the strategy to a gathering of staff, management, academic partners, and guests.

The vision of the strategy is to improve patient health through world class research. There are four main aims in the strategy:

1. Develop a culture that embraces the pursuit of research to improve clinical practice and deliver exceptional care.
2. Empower patients as partners in high quality research.
3. Increase collaborative partnerships.
4. Develop research structures and supports.

This research strategy builds on the proud tradition of research excellence and in pioneering advances in clinical practice at the Mercy University Hospital. The Mercy University Hospital is a teaching & research hospital affiliated with University College Cork and the Health Research Board Clinical Research Facility has its

administrative centre and adult research unit located on the Mercy University Hospital site. This research strategy also highlights the on-going collaboration with two of our leading partners in UCC, APC Microbiome Ireland and the Tyndall National Institute, who were represented at the launch.



L-R Dr. Kieran O'Connor, Dr. Evelyn Flanagan, Mary-Clare O'Regan, Clinical Research Facility and Paul Galvin, Tyndall

The next four years offer an unprecedented opportunity for Mercy University Hospital to continue our long and rich heritage of research in the hospital and build on our strong research foundations.

# Happy 30th Birthday - MUH Cardiology Department

**Mercy University Hospital recently hosted a special celebration to honour 30 years of the Cardiology Department. Mercy Times caught up with Cardiac Physiologist, Claire O’Herlihy to acknowledge this incredible milestone.**

“It is hard to imagine it is 30 years since the MUH opened the doors of a non-invasive cardiology investigative lab in the prefabrication building adjacent to X Ray. Prof Michael Murphy was the lead cardiologist and had a specialist interest in cardiac pharmacology. The source of funding for the Department came from this strand of medicine and so our name over the door for the first 20 years of our existence was “Dept of Clinical Pharmacology”. Our first NCHD rotation included the familiar names of Dr Conor O Shea and Dr Carl Vaughan.



Access to the Department provided the biggest challenge as it included a ramp and a 90-degree corner which restricted any use of trolleys. Thank goodness our only “emergency” during the 10 odd years there was a fire drill. This event was triggered by the celebration of a 40th birthday and the resulting smoke from candles triggered an alarm which resulted in Donie Goulding and company running down the corridor with fire extinguishers in hand.

The Department has expanded over the years and this growth was acknowledged when we transferred to the fourth floor (penthouse) of Lee View Block in the early 2000’s. When the time came for Prof Michael Murphy to take up the reins as President of UCC, Prof Carl Vaughan stepped in as cardiologist and head of Department. In 2004. He was joined by Prof David Kerins in 2006.

Together they provide expertise in invasive assessment by angiogram and the ever-expanding cardiac CT, MRI, and genetic mapping.

The initial staffing for the Department was provided by the Dept of Nursing as was the practice nationally. This has evolved and now the staff are a combination of Nursing and Cardiac Physiologists.

The Department provides both inpatient and outpatient cardiac services. Electrocardiogram (ECG), 24-hour blood pressure monitoring, 24–72-hour Holter monitoring, Exercise stress testing (EST), Cardioversion, Trans thoracic Echocardiograph (TTE), and transoesophageal Echo (TOE) are provided.

Demands on the Department increase each year as the hospital expands. Reflecting this, we are developing a new Clinic Room. This year will also see the Department linked into the MUH IT system which will provide unlimited data storage, data access remotely and ultimately, the opportunity to request the various investigations online.”



# Mercy Moments

## It Takes a Village!

It has been a busy few years in terms of infrastructural development at Mercy University Hospital (MUH) and so it was time to pause and thank the MUH multidisciplinary team, who contributed across every aspect of the development to make the vision a reality. A special celebration and the Mercy “comfortable cup of tea” was enjoyed by all.



## Managing People Skills

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.

## COYGIG

Mercy University Hospital had an extra reason to celebrate the Girls in Green at the recent FIFA Women's World Cup as star striker Denise O'Sullivan's sister Sinead is a valued member of our Catering Team #TeamSpirit.



## MUH Employee Wellbeing - #TheMercyWay

Caring for the Carers = Caring for our Community! The second Wellbeing Week of 2023 was held recently with lots of treats, pampering, healthy tips and information talks for staff!.

# Introducing – the National Cancer Information System (NCIS)

**Mercy University Hospital (MUH) is delighted to incorporate an information system to its cancer care services to enhance the care pathway of for the people it serves.**



On August 14th, 2023, the Mercy University Hospital went live with the National Cancer Information System (NCIS). NCIS is a single national computerised system for the delivery of Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapy (SACT) in Medical Oncology and Haemato-Oncology care services.

NCIS will allow for the e-prescribing, recording of compounding and dispensing of medicines in the pharmacy aseptic unit and for the e-administration of SACT and supportive medicines. It also includes functionality for hosting and recording Multi-Disciplinary Meetings (MDM) and generating reports.

## National Rollout

The National rollout of the NCIS project is being led by the National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP) in conjunction with the HSE office of eHealth and Disruptive Technologies who are responsible for the delivery of technology to support and improve healthcare in Ireland. It is a key priority project for the NCCP to facilitate hospitals in implementing quality, efficient SACT in line with the National Cancer Strategy 2012-2026.

NCIS is to be introduced to all 26 Public Hospitals (both voluntary and statutory) providing SACT to oncology and haemato-oncology patients. The Mercy was the 12th hospital to go live nationally following on from its South/Southwest colleagues in University Hospital Kerry who went live in April 2022 and the South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital who went live in February 2023.

## Benefits

The benefits of implementing this system are numerous. It will allow for greater visibility of patient's haematology oncology information by presenting all relevant healthcare providers with a timely complete longitudinal overview of a patient through a single point of access.

Other key benefits include:

- recording of all medical oncology and haematology data in a consistent manner
- enhanced security of patient's personal information
- enhanced medicines governance
- access to patient SACT records to facilitate the continuation of the care or the transition of care in a seamless manner off site should the need arise.

## The Team

The road to "Go Live" was navigated by a local NCIS implementation team led by Geraldine O'Rourke NCIS Project manager, a dual qualified engineer and pharmacist with experience in software development & project management as well as clinical experience in both primary and secondary care settings. In partnership with NCIS colleagues, Maeve Dennehy Chief II Pharmacist Dispensary & Clinical Services & outgoing NCIS Pharmacist lead, Elaine Crowley Senior Pharmacist & NCIS pharmacist lead and Sinead Holland Paediatric Nurse with a special interest in Oncology and NCIS Nurse lead. The team faced challenges during the implementation but with the

inspirational support and guidance of a broad and highly experienced Steering Group Committee led by the Project SRO Director of Nursing Margaret McKiernan and the clinical Lead Professor Derek Power the true essence of the Mercy Value of Team Spirit endured.

The Steering Group Committee comprised of representatives from nursing (CNM3 Valerie O'Mahony), pharmacy (Pharmacy Manager Ciaran Halleran), information and communication technology ( ICT Manager Peter O'Callaghan), healthcare records ( Healthcare Records Manager Edel Coakley and MDT co-ordinators Jennifer Bracken and Ann Williams), paediatric nursing (Aife O' Connell, Clare Curtin, Noreen Crowley) as well as administration (Deirdre O'Connor).

## The Way Forward

The Mercy University Hospital, under the stewardship of CEO Anne Coyle, is committed to advancing its digital innovation strategies by engaging with modalities that aim to improve services, optimise processes, improve efficiencies, progress internal collaboration, and reduce costs whilst complying with data security and information governance. The NCIS project may be in its infancy, but it's aim is to assist in solidifying MUH's position at the forefront of providing patient centred, evidence-based care by utilising the most up to date technologies available, and in the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy support the health and wellbeing of the those we serve.

# #This Is Mercy

## Sonny Curran Memorial Skydive in aid of Mercy Kids & Teens Appeal



Our colleague, Porter Colin Curran has recently completed a charity skydive in memory of his little boy, Sonny, who sadly passed away on October 18th, 2020, at just 25 days old.

When he was born, Sonny was diagnosed with Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia (CDH), meaning he had a hole in his diaphragm. Sadly, Sonny passed away in the care of the staff of Crumlin Children's Hospital a few weeks later.

Three years on and Colin is planning his skydive in aid of the Mercy University Hospital Foundation's Kids & Teens Appeal. The skydive was due to take place September 25th, on what would be Sonny's 3rd birthday, remembering the little boy who touched the lives of his family and the close-knit community in Cork's northside during his short life. Unfortunately, due to adverse weather conditions the skydive was rescheduled to 25th of November.

Colin was joined by a group of colleagues including Hospital Porters, Philip Aldridge, Evan Cashman, James Taylor, Micheal Murray and Jimmy McCarthy; as well as Healthcare Assistant, Jason O'Sullivan, who supported the cause and completed the charity skydive at Irish Parachute Club, Co. Offlay. To be joined by so many of his colleagues was a great morale boost to the teams concerned and demonstrated an innate understanding of our core values – especially team spirit!



Speaking ahead of the upcoming skydive, Colin Curran said *"Each year, my wife Karen and I mark Sonny's birthday in a special way. This year I am delighted that my colleagues from The Mercy, a hospital which means so much to so many in our local community, will join me in honouring Sonny's memory, by taking to the skies with me. The funds we raise will help other families with sick children in The Mercy to have the most comfortable experience possible, in what is a very difficult time in their lives."*

In the three years since Sonny's passing Colin together with his family and friends have raised over €50,000 in memory of his beloved Son, for various organizations that provided care and support for Colin and his family during an extremely difficult time. This year he has raised over €15,000 for the Mercy Foundation and is on track to hit €20,000. A fantastic result for a very worthy cause. Thank you, Colin.

This year, the MUH Foundation awarded the **Hospital Heroes Mercy Star** to Jimmy, James, Michael, Evan, Phil and Jason to acknowledge their amazing contribution.

You can still donate to the 'Sonny Curran Memorial Skydive' fundraiser, simply visit <https://www.idonate.ie/fundraiser/colinCurran> to make a one-off donation.

# Meet the Team – Medical Social Work Department



## Mercy Spirit

The Medical Social Work (MSW) Department has been operational at Mercy University Hospital from 1989 and embodies the Mercy ethos in its truest sense. The values underpinning social work practice are aligned with those of the Mercy University Hospital; the department is focussed particularly on addressing the psychosocial needs of patients and their families in an active spirit of promoting compassionate social justice.

Social Work is a profession based on principles of human rights and social justice that work to empower individuals, groups, and communities to develop their full potential and well-being. A practice priority is very much focussed on meeting the needs of vulnerable and marginalised individuals and groups. Owing to the inner-city location of Mercy University Hospital, this priority particularly informs all social work interventions in the hospital setting.

## Growth and Expansion

Since the establishment of a social work service at MUH in 1989, the team has experienced significant expansion and development, both in terms of resources and specialist areas. Originally a stand-alone post, the MSW service is now resourced by a team of twelve. The MSW team structure includes, at present, a Principal Social Worker, Social Work Team Leader, Senior Medical Social Workers (x3) and Staff Grade Medical Social Workers/PQSWs (x5). All Medical Social Workers are qualified to postgraduate level and are registered by the Statutory Regulator CORU – the Health and Social Care Professionals Council. MUH Medical Social Workers subscribe to the CORU Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Social Workers (2011).

## Our Service

In practical terms, the MSW Department deals with psycho-social issues associated with Homelessness, Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence (DSGBV), Alcohol and Substance Misuse, Child Protection and Welfare, and Adult Safeguarding (Older and/or Vulnerable Adults) issues. Referrals relating to these issues are received from the Emergency Department, Mercy Urgent Care Centre, St Francis Unit, and all hospital

wards. In addition, there are Medical Social Workers designated to the specialist areas including Gerontology, Paediatric Haematology/Oncology, Adult Oncology, and Palliative Care.

Year on year, the Medical Social Work Department experiences an increase in the number of referrals received from all service areas across the MUH Campus. 2022 saw a 24% increase on the number of referrals received and this trend is, approaching year's end, already increasing significantly. This upward trend is indicative of the growing complexities with which people are tasked to navigate in their lives, and reflects changing social demographics, increased social isolation, and the broad diminution of social networks and related supports available to individuals generally. A Senior Medical Social Worker, Inclusion Health, has recently been appointed and will deliver this specialist service from January 2024.

## Compliance and Regulation

Social work practice is informed and scaffolded by statutory regulations and legislation. Medical Social Workers are the key stakeholders in the management of child protection and welfare concerns. As mandated persons (**with** our HSCP, medical and nursing colleagues), our practice is informed by the Children First Act 2015, Children First Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 and HSE Child Protection and Welfare Policy 2019. Medical Social Work, with our Quality and Risk Management colleagues, continue to promote the implementation of Children First in the hospital setting.

Recent legislation relating to Assisted Decision Making (Assisted Decision-Making Capacity Act 2015) represents a significant service demand in the acute setting. A Senior Medical Social Worker was appointed this year and designated to ADM related issues. An Implementation Group has also been established to oversee staff responsibilities relating to ADM referrals. This implementation process is supported by a full-time Project Manager.

From a multi-disciplinary and interagency perspective, the Medical Social Work Department is, at present, represented on the following committees and steering groups:

- MUH Children First Committee
- Discharge Planning Committee
- Integrated Unscheduled Care Operational Group
- MUH HIU Working Group
- MUH End of Life Care Committee
- MUH HSCP Managers Group
- ADMCA Implementation Group
- SSWHG HMSW/UCC Steering Group
- SSWHG HMSW Group (ADM/ASG)
- SSWHG Children First Committee
- CKCH MUH Integrated Discharge Committee
- CKCH Homeless Discharge Policy Group

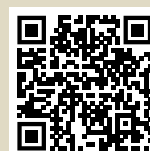
## If you have the words ...

Advocacy and empowerment are central components of Medical Social Work; in collaborative efforts to enhance acute and community integration, to respond to resource issues, the patient centred approach has never been more important. Seamus Heaney reminds us *“if you have the words, there’s always a chance that you’ll find the way”*. Underpinned by both social work and Mercy University Hospital values, the Medical Social Work

Department continues to empower our patients and to support them in finding their voice.



# “OPAT: Your Path Home” (an online patient resource)



Scan the QR code to see the videos

Outpatient parenteral antibiotic treatment (OPAT) allows patients who are medically stable to safely receive their intravenous (IV) medication at home, if they have been assessed as suitable. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, it became harder for OPAT patients and their families to have in-person discussions with the hospital OPAT team due to face masks and visitor restrictions. There was no national online resource for OPAT patients available to learn about the program. Responding to this need, Fiona Guidera and Liz Forde devised a plan! Fiona recently shared this wonderful success story with Mercy Times.

## SPARK Innovation

“Liz Forde and I were OPAT Clinical Nurse Specialists at the Mercy and we applied for funding to create an online resource. In April 2021, we were successful and received €2,000 funding from the HSE SPARK Innovation COVID Call. With support from Margaret McKiernan, Director of Nursing and Kay O’Mahony, Assistant Director of Nursing, we partnered with the Creative Digital Media course at Cork College of Further Education, Douglas Street (formerly known as St. Johns College). We were facilitated by Paula McCarthy Principal, Deirdre McCann, Creative Digital Media Course Co-ordinator, and colleague Brid Corcoran. Arthur Jackson, Infectious Disease Consultant & Clinical Lead for the OPAT Service CUH and MUH worked with us to develop the resources.

The class of 2021/22 Creative Digital Media took on this extracurricular project during the year and after their end of year exams. Together we produced an online patient resource. Four videos provide information about OPAT for patients, families, and carers:

- OPAT-Your Path Home – A short animation
- OPAT - Before You Go Home – Video
- OPAT -When You Go Home - Video
- OPAT – Role of Infectious Disease Consultant – Video

## Success

In December 2022, this collaborative initiative between MUH/ HSE and Cork College of Further Education won the Further Education Category of the Cork Lifelong Learning Awards for “Innovative Inter-Agency Lifelong Learning Endeavours” that contributes to community and society. In June 2023, a poster (assisted by Breeda Herlihy, MUH, Librarian) about the project was awarded the category prize for “Improvements in Effective Care & Support”, at the MUH Clinical Audit and Quality Improvement Day.

The students benefitted greatly from working with us on the project, not only enhancing their knowledge and skills but giving them a taste of the demands and delights of working on a professional project. Best of all has been the feedback we’ve received from both patients and families on how the videos help them better understand the possibilities of OPAT. My former colleague Liz Forde is now the Advanced Nurse Practitioner for the Cork OPAT service which is facilitating an increased number of patients to leave hospital sooner than they previously might have.”



# 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.



## Introducing Culture Week

This year, the MUH Occupational Health Department opened celebrations for a morning of celebration of Staff cultural diversity. All staff were invited to join in the launch of this Week, which will become a fixture in the Mercy Calendar in 2024. Staff were also invited to peg their country of origin on our Mercy Map, and there was competitions and refreshments and great opportunities for everyone to sit, chat, understand, appreciate and gain new perspectives about each other.



## Long Service Recipients

During Mercy Week celebrations Mercy University Hospital is delighted to honour and acknowledge the long service commitment of staff to “The Mercy”. CEO, Anne Coyle presented the Long Service Pins to Staff at a special celebration.

A total of **9** staff were acknowledged for 30 years of service whilst **36** members of staff reached 20 years’ service with a further **18** members of staff receiving 10-year Pins.



## 40 Years of Service

One member of staff – Elizabeth (Liz) Deasy, a much-valued member of the Department of Nursing reached the 40-year milestone of service and Elizabeth was especially celebrated among her colleagues across the hospital at the celebration of the Long Service Recipients.



## 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 **Information and Communications Technology**

## Manager, Peter O’Callaghan.

Speaking to his nomination, Chief Financial Officer, Brendan Doyle noted Peter’s unwavering commitment to Mercy University Hospital, especially during trying times, for example, adverse weather events, the Global Pandemic and recent Cyber attack, “Peter has not only stood the test of time but has also played a pivotal role in the development of our IT infrastructure, guiding it from the era of dial-up to the current digital age. While our IT networks have faced numerous challenges over the years, Peter’s resolve has remained unshakable. Let us remember that his unwavering dedication and the values he upholds are a shining example to us all and let us celebrate an individual who embodies the values and spirit of Mercy University Hospital. He represents the very best of Mercy University Hospital, and we are honored to celebrate his remarkable career”.

A special presentation was made to Peter at the Mercy Stars Event, held in the Rochestown Park Hotel on September 29th.



## Mercy Day Mass

Mercy Day Mass, which pays tribute to Catherine McAuley, the Sisters of Mercy and all Mercy colleagues, past and present was celebrated by Bishop Fintan Gavin, on September 20th.

# Values Award



## Congratulations Yvonne and John



The winner of the ninth Employee Choice Values Award was **Yvonne Quinn (Finance – Procurement)** who was nominated by her colleagues under the Values of Excellence and Team Spirit, for her mentorship, support and guidance to new staff or staff changing roles – embodying the Mercy Values through demonstrating presence, empathy, understanding and patience.



The tenth Award winner was **John Meskill (Porter)** or “Gentleman John”, who was nominated by his colleagues under the Values of Compassion and Respect for his innate sense of Mercy and especially how he has not just embodied the Mercy Values of caring for patients and their families in mind, body and spirit throughout his 22 years of service but signed, sealed and delivered them each day.

**A commendation, in the form of a specially designed Certificate is awarded to the remaining nominees to acknowledge their nomination.**

### Q2 Commendations

**Patricia Bohane** (Administration – Bed Management)  
**Diana Cowhig** (Department of Nursing – St. Francis Unit)  
**Rose Crowley** (Administration – Medical Secretary)  
**Luca de Nardis** (Catering)  
**Mary Garvan** (Department of Nursing – Night Duty)  
**John Healy** (Physiotherapy)  
**Annette Lavers** (Department of Nursing – Night Duty)  
**Martina Linehan** (Administration – St. John’s Urology Unit)  
**Margaret Lynch** (Department of Nursing – Assistant Director of Nursing)  
**Dr Peter McEneaney** (Radiology)  
**Alison Mullins** (Pharmacy)  
**Lee Murray** (Technical Services Department)  
**Angela Quinn** (Catering – Small Canteen)  
**Niamh Tully** (Administration – Medical Records)

### Q3 Commendations

**Susan Almeida** (Department of Nursing – St. Francis Unit)  
**Helena Curtin** (Department of Nursing – Emergency Department)  
**Denise Fogarty** (Administration – Emergency Department)  
**Anne Healy** (Department of Nursing – Emergency Department)  
**Michelle Hodnett** (Dietetics)  
**Conor Kelleher** (Technical Services Department)  
**Grainne Kennedy** (Human Resources)  
**Annette Lavers** (Department of Nursing – Night Duty)  
**Jerry McCarthy** (Porter)  
**Enda Orr** (Department of Nursing – Emergency Department)  
**Catherine O’Sullivan** (Department of Nursing - ADON)

# Winter Warmers

To keep us cosy for dark winter evenings, MUH Senior Chef, **Gary Costello** has not one, but two wonderful recipes to share!

## Curried Pumpkin and Coconut Soup



### INGREDIENTS

- 1 kilo of pumpkin roasted.
- 2 large, sweet potatoes peeled and diced.
- 100gr carrots peeled and diced.
- 1 large onion diced.
- 50gr chopped celery.
- 4 tps. garam masala
- 1 tsp of cumin
- 1 tsp of coriander
- 1 chilli chopped.
- 1 tsb turmeric
- 1 can of coconut milk 400ml
- 1 litres of vegetable stock
- 50 gr butter
- 50 gr flour

### METHOD

1. Roast pumpkin and remove flesh from skin.
  2. In a pot sweat of onions carrots celery and sweet potato and chilli in the butter
  3. Then add your spices and continue to cook.
  4. Then remove from the heat and add flour slowly.
  5. Return to heat and add your hot stock slowly to the mixture.
  6. Then add your roasted pumpkin and coconut milk.
  7. Continue to cook for 30 minutes.
  8. Blend and season with salt and white pepper
- Serve with warm brown bread

## Slow Cooked Beef Red Onion Hot Pot



### INGREDIENTS

- 1 kilo of steak pieces.
- 100gr carrots roughly chopped.
- 200 grams of red onions roughly chopped.
- 100 grams celery
- 15 grams thyme
- 2 cloves garlic crushed
- 1 bay leaf.
- 50 grams butter
- 70 grams flour
- 150grms red onion relish
- 2 bay leaf's
- 25 grams of tomato paste
- 1 glass of red wine. – 1 for the pot -1 for you.
- 1 litre of warm beef stock
- 1 kilo of potatoes peeled par boiled and finely sliced.

### METHOD

1. Toss the beef in 20 grams of the flour to coat well -remove excess flour
  2. Add butter to a heavy sauce pan and brown your beef.
  3. Remove beef and place into casserole dish.
  4. Fry onions and carrots and celery in the same pan that the beef was in.
  5. Add garlic and thyme and stir well
  6. Add tomato paste.
  7. Remove from heat and add remaining flour
  8. Transfer back to the stove and cook it out and slowly add your beef stock and red wine
  9. Then add your onion relish and bay leaf's and bring to simmer. Season well
  10. Transfer this mixture onto your beef and cover with parchment and tin foil.
  11. Cook for 3hours at 160 degrees.
  12. When this is done take it from the oven and top with the sliced potatoes
  13. Butter the tops of the potatoes with a little garlic butter and fresh thyme and salt
  14. Place back into the oven until potatoes are crisp
- Serve with creamed potato and green beans

# Challenging Ageism - Positive Ageing Week

**Positive Ageing Week (PAW) was celebrated at Mercy University Hospital throughout the first week of October. PAW is an Age Action initiative to promote the agency of older people and to celebrate the contributions they make to our families, workplaces, communities, and society. Specialist Registrar in Geriatric Medicine, Aoife O'Connor shared, with Mercy Times, as to why PAW is so important.**

"The week was dedicated to Challenging Ageism which refers to how we think, feel and act towards others and ourselves based on age. Ageism may be conscious or unconscious. Age is one of the first things we notice about someone, and ageism arises when age is used to categorise people in ways that harms or disadvantages them.

As part of a PAW we aimed to promote age equality. This involves making an active effort to overcome discrimination based on age. This can be done by promoting educational activities to enhance understanding and empathy about ageing, and by addressing policies and laws that tackle inequality. Intergenerational contact also has many benefits, including improved health and psychosocial wellbeing, with an enhanced sense of social connectedness, and reduced loneliness.



## Volunteering

As part of PAW, the Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind paid a visit to MUH. A waggy worker, along with human volunteers, donated a few hours of his time to educate the patients, staff and visitors about the charity. The national charity is dedicated to enabling people with vision impairment and families of children with autism to improve mobility and independence. They have almost 400 guide and assistance dogs' clients in Ireland and provide the service free of charge. The charity was initially founded in a small farmhouse in Co Cork in 1976. It is estimated that almost 250,000 people are visually impaired or blind. This charity is a vital resource to enable these people to maintain their freedom, and all donations to their charity or time volunteered to the service are greatly appreciated. This may be done by assisting with puppy raising, temporary boarding, rehoming or fundraising.

## Men's Sheds

On Wednesday, the City of Corks Men's Shed, raised the roof of MUH. This group is part of the City of Cork Male Voice Choir, which is coming into its 55th anniversary. The Men's Shed is community-based project, initially formed in Ireland in 2009, in Tipperary. There are now over 450 throughout Ireland. It offers a movement where men come together after retirement to learn, share skills, get involved in community work and make long lasting friendships. Each shed is autonomous, with activities differing from one group to the next.

This City of Corks Men's Shed, have been volunteering their time, by singing and performing throughout the county visiting nursing homes, masses, providing concerts for charities and fundraisers. If you have a skill you would like to share or learn a skill, or get involved with the local community, more information is available on [menssheds.ie](http://menssheds.ie)

As part of PAW week, we look to continue to reframe how we think, feel and act towards ageing and older people. Going forward, I would encourage everyone to be aware of promoting a positive attitude towards ageing. It is important to keep fit and healthy, feel good about yourself, and engage fully in life as you age, and encourage others to do so too!"



*Continued on page 20*

## Collaboration with Triskel Arts Centre

**Neasa Fitzpatrick**, SpR in Geriatric Medicine told Mercy Times of a very exciting collaboration between MUH and the Triskel Arts Centre to mark Positive Ageing Week in Cork:

*"Ageing for me is not a condition, but a subject."* – A quote from French film director Agnès Varda when describing her creative output in the latter portion of her life, working right up until to her ninetieth birthday and her death the same year. Varda leads the charge in an increasingly productive demographic in the film world: older female filmmakers. This year, for Positive Ageing Week, we wanted to highlight their achievements. Thus, in a joint venture with the Mercy Hospital Geriatric Medicine Department, the Triskel Arts Centre and myself, ran a very special film season at the Triskel Cinema: Reframing Ageing: The Cinema of Older Women, from October 2nd to 4th.

Here we must thank Chris O'Neill, head of cinema programming at Triskel Arts Centre. When I approached him with the idea of a season dedicated to the work of older female directors, he met it with immediate enthusiasm and enterprise. Thanks to his work in sourcing the films, we were able to come up with a fantastic programme. We opened on Monday with the crowd-pleaser *Faces Places*, from 88-year-old Agnès Varda, a charming documentary where the director travels around the French countryside making murals with a young street artist. Tuesday brought *Both Sides of the Blade*, from Claire Denis, aged 76, a nerve-wracking account of relationships and infidelity in middle age. Finally, Wednesday closed the season with irreverent, star-studded black comedy *The Party* from Sally Potter, who was 68 at the time of release.

What strikes about the three works is just how different they are: thematically, aesthetically and tonally. They demonstrate the enormous range and ambition within the pursuits of older women. The films are notably similar, however, in their insights into both society and interpersonal relationships – for better or worse. Perhaps no demographic is better positioned to comment on these matters than a woman who has lived a long life of them.

I hope everybody who turned out to see the films enjoyed their unique perspectives. With over a hundred tickets sold, the programme was an enormous success, and we sincerely thank everyone who was able to make it. Long may we take advantage of these opportunities to celebrate and facilitate creativity in later life!

## 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!**

We are delighted to welcome **Tara Carrig** to the Mercy Times Editorial Team. Tara will represent HR. Welcome to the Team Tara!

### Meet your Mercy Times Editorial Team for this Edition



#### **Tara Carrig:**

Tara supports HR Recruitment – ext 5652



#### **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!

Con Cadogan, Alison Clair (MUH Foundation), Gary Costello, Brendan Doyle, Ciaran Evans, Tracey Dineen, Christina Favier, Neasa Fitzpatrick, Evelyn Flanagan, Fiona Guidera, Derek Hennessy, Margaret McKiernan, Aoife O'Connor, Dr. Kieran O'Connor, Majella O'Connor, Claire O'Herlihy, Geraldine O'Rourke, Avril Ring, and Denis Spillane