



Dr Anne Dolan, Consultant Anaesthesiologist at Sligo University Hospital demonstrating the 'Little Journey' app with Hugh Gannon from Sandyhill and Elie Langan from Grange.

'Little Journey' app launched at SUH

Sligo University Hospital has launched the 'Little Journey' virtual reality app to help young children between the ages of 3 and 12, to prepare for surgery and reduce their anxiety in advance of their hospital stay.

The 'Little Journey' app provides 360 degree views of all the areas the children will visit at the hospital as well as useful information about anaesthesiology tailored to the age of the child.

Dr Anne Dolan, Consultant Anaesthesiologist at Sligo University Hospital said, "Preoperative anxiety in children and parents is a very real phenomenon before undergoing general anaesthesia. As healthcare professionals we recognise the increasing impact of anxiety and the physiological negative impact it can have on the child's and parent's ability to cope with events surrounding the experience of anaesthesiology and surgery.

Children may have anxiety around the clinical environment, their expectation of events, meeting unfamiliar people and even fear of pain. Parents generally accompany their child to theatre and are present with their child when the anaesthetic is first administered.

To read about the launch of the 'Little Journey' app, [click here](#).



Seated from left: Dr Anne Dolan, Consultant Anaesthesiologist; Dr Sinead Bredin, Consultant Anaesthesiologist; Domhnall Mc Loughlin, Assistant General Manager; Bernie Clancy, CNM2 Paediatrics. Back row, from left: Sally Boland, CNM2, ENT Theatre; Martin Caldwell, Consultant General Surgeon; Alison Smith, CNM2, Theatre; and Maureen McGourty, CNM, Day Services.

Oct 2019 - 31 days

TWEET HIGHLIGHTS

Top Tweet earned 12.9K impressions

Have you ever wondered what we do in Roscommon Injury Unit! Well wonder no more..... Maggie is here to tell you all you need to know. [#Injuryunit](#) [#minorinjuries](#) [#RIU](#) [@HSELive](#) pic.twitter.com/zlaksE4lmy



Top media Tweet earned 4,874 impressions

Professor Martin Cormican, HSE National Lead for infection control getting his [#FluVaccine](#). High vaccination rates help prevent the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases. [#GetYourBestShotToday](#) [#VaccinesSaveLives](#) [#StayWellThisWinter](#) pic.twitter.com/zsdqN1CRgH



Nov 2019 - 30 days

TWEET HIGHLIGHTS

Top Tweet earned 8,870 impressions

Delighted to welcome [@SimonHarrisTD](#) to Portlincula University Hospital [#PUH](#) to meet with management, staff and patients and to discuss the progress of the new 50 bed ward block. Works for the new ward block will begin in early 2020. pic.twitter.com/iDBXTNqT1u



Top media Tweet earned 7,794 impressions

An educational and informative day hosted by Sligo University Hospital [#SUH](#) raising awareness ahead of International [#StopthePressure](#) day. Pressure ulcers cause pain and reduce the quality of life for the sufferer ● [#stopthepressure](#). pic.twitter.com/bdVFni3buF



Dec 2019 - 11 days so far...

TWEET HIGHLIGHTS

Top Tweet earned 5,489 impressions

[#StormAtiyah](#) didn't dampen the festive spirits at [#UHG](#) this afternoon for the switching on the Christmas Remembrance Tree Lights. Thank you to everyone who came out today to join with us in remembering our loved ones who are not with us this Christmas. [#Lightupalife](#) pic.twitter.com/oRgTWSfvG6



Top media Tweet earned 5,264 impressions

Important Notice Visiting Restrictions at [#LUH](#) – we are requesting that members of the public do not visit the hospital. Thank you for your co-operation. Click here [====>bit.ly/2qh56PG](https://bit.ly/2qh56PG) for more. pic.twitter.com/mpwfy2iFTn

Letterkenny University Hospital



Influenza Outbreak
Visitor Restrictions
in place!

Chief Executive Officer

Saolta Group

Dear Colleagues

As we come towards the end of 2019, it is timely to reflect on all the work undertaken across the Group over the last year.

The **Patient Experience Survey** was published in November and outlined clearly what patients thought of the services they received in our hospitals. There were a number of key findings but one consistent theme is the level of satisfaction patients report in respect of the care they receive from our staff and while it comes as no surprise, it shouldn't pass without comment.

We face challenges across the health services and particularly in our hospitals, these include long waiting times in EDs and significant inpatient and outpatient waiting lists. While it is important for us to recognise the difficulties and shortcomings that we face, I think it is also important that we recognise the excellent care that is provided by staff in our hospitals throughout the region.

I want to acknowledge and thank you for your commitment to patient care, for your hard work and dedication, and for your continued efforts to deal with the challenges faced by our services.

We recently held the **Staff Recognition Awards** ceremony in Claremorris. It was a very successful event, with over 160 submissions from across the seven hospitals. The winners in each category are listed below and you will see photos on pages 18 and 19.

Last month we published the outcome of the **options appraisal process** undertaken to identify the most appropriate way to proceed with the future development of hospital services in Galway. The recommendation is to develop a new fit-for-purpose, 1,150 bedded acute hospital on the MPUH site. See page 16 for more details.

This proposed new hospital will also serve the wider Saolta region and will accommodate elective medical admissions, diagnostics including endoscopy services and ambulatory care. This is a long term project which will take a number of years to progress and there are many other critical developments which we will continue to progress on our other hospital sites in the meantime, including the new Emergency Department at UHG, the new Diabetes Centre at SUH, a new Renal Unit at LUH, the new 50 Bed Ward Block at PUH and the new Rehabilitation Unit in RUH. We will keep you updated on these projects as they progress in 2020.

As you are aware the **Group Strategy 2019-2023** was launched in March. We are continuing to progress with a number of significant projects identified in the strategy. As part of the Saolta Integrated Governance Project, the Cancer Services MCAN and Women's & Children's MCAN will be in place by the end of January 2020. This is a significant change in governance and will result in more focused and integrated working for these specialties across the hospital sites. More information on the new MCANs is available in the Project Management Office section on page 20.

We recently received approval for a number of projects under the **Sláintecare Integration Fund**. Many of these projects are joint initiatives with our colleagues in Community Healthcare West and CHO1 and present us with a great opportunity to provide new and integrated services for our patients. The recruitment process for a number of key posts to support these new initiatives is currently underway. It is expected that the projects will commence by the end of this year and be completed by 31 December 2020.

The projects are:

- Telemedicine for Cystic Fibrosis Patients – GUH
- Urology Proof of Concept Project – Saolta Group
- Heart Failure – PUH
- Pain Management Programme – SUH
- Electronic Recording for GP Lab Tests – GUH/Saolta
- Community Cardiac Diagnostics – GUH
- Older Persons Project – GUH and Community Healthcare West
- Self-Care in Management of Headache – pilot site



Tony Canavan, CEO

Finally, on behalf of the Saolta University Health Care Group Executive and our Board, I would like to wish you all a very happy and healthy Christmas.

Tony Canavan
Chief Executive Officer

Saolta Staff Recognition Awards 2019

Galway University Hospitals

- The Maternity Department won the 'Award for Innovation in a Non Clinical Area' for their work on a maternity website.
- The 'Quality Improvement and Patient Experience Award' was presented to the Patient Flow Improvement Team.
- The 'Outstanding Employee Award' was presented to Catherine Cunniffe who works in the Bed Management Office.

Roscommon University Hospital

- The Rapid Access Haematuria Service Team won the Award for 'Innovation in a Clinical Area'.
- The 'Outstanding Employee Award' was presented to Noreen Fallon, Respiratory Clinical Nurse Specialist.

Mayo University Hospital

- The 'Outstanding Employee Award' was presented to Kay Moran who works in the Human Resources Department.

Portiuncula University Hospital

- The 'Outstanding Employee Award' was presented to Christie Costello, who has worked with the Maintenance Team Grounds Staff for the past 22 years.

Sligo University Hospital

- The Dermatology Team won the 'Research Award' for their work with members of the Traveller Community on the topic of skin health.
- The 'Outstanding Employees Award' was presented to Jackie Wallace and Hilda Harte who work in the Lake Isle Coffee Dock at the hospital.

Letterkenny University Hospital

- The Donegal Clinical Research Academy won the 'Education and Training Award' for their emergency abdominal surgery course for students.
- The 'Outstanding Employees Award' was presented to Dolores Devenney who works in the Phlebotomy Services at the hospital.

Chief Operations Officer

As we approach the end of the year it is timely to reflect on progress which has been made across the Group at many levels.

We are continuing to progress key capital projects including the Emergency Department/Women's and Children's development at UHG and the Radiation Oncology project where we expect to see construction commence in March next year. The new diabetes centre in SUH is at the enabling works stage and we are continuing to progress the new 50 ward block in PUH.

In ICT we are continuing to implement a number of critical projects including the Group PAS project, the National Cancer Information System, the Euroking Maternity Information System and developing a proposal in relation to order comms for the Group.

We continue to work towards reducing the length of time patients wait for hospital appointments and procedures across the Group and are working closely with the NTPF on insourcing and outsourcing initiatives for our various sites.

Looking to next year, we are currently developing our Operational Plan for 2020 in the context of our budget allocation and in line with the Saolta Strategy key priorities and the National Service Plan KPIs. This plan will be submitted to National Acute Hospitals before the Christmas break.

I want to thank you all for your hard work and commitment in 2019 and wish you and your families a happy and peaceful Christmas.



Ann Cosgrove, COO

Chief Financial Officer

Projected financial performance at year-end.

At the end of November the Group is forecasting an adverse variance of €4.8m over our financial limit.

Expenditure at the end of October has increased by €42.6m compared to the same period last year. The Group's payroll costs are over budget by €4.3m.

It was clear from the outset that 2019 would be very challenging in terms of finance for the Group. In an effort to stay within our budget the Group implemented saving plans that commenced in the first quarter of 2019.

Although we are achieving the targeted savings, increased patient activity has negated all savings.

Currently Group Finance are working on the budget allocation for 2020 and we will update you on the final budget for 2020 in the next edition of the newsletter.



Maurice Power, CFO

Director of Human Resources

Staff Engagement and Wellbeing

We have been fortunate to add a very important asset to the HR team in the form of a Group Lead for Employee Engagement and Wellbeing, Ms Elaine Fallon.

This is a role with an exclusive focus on listening to staff needs, supporting them in the challenges they face and promoting their wellbeing through a very experienced and expert practitioner.

Elaine has a number of priorities set out for 2020 among which are providing a range of training and development programmes, information on coaching and managing staff health and wellbeing in the workplace. Please see page 16 for more on Elaine and her role.

Leaders in Management Programme 2020.

I am delighted to tell you that the intake process for the next cohort of the eight-day Leadership Programme designed for Managers in Community Healthcare West and the Saolta Hospital Group is under way.

Delivered in collaboration with the HSE HR Leadership Education and Talent Development Team (LEDT), this is a very exciting opportunity for ambitious staff to stretch themselves in developing their leadership skills with a view to career development. Application forms were recently made available through e-services and must be returned to the LEDT office no later than Friday 10 January.



John Shoughnessy

Chief Director of Nursing and Midwifery

As we busily prepare for the festive season, we should take a moment to reflect on some of our achievements in 2019.

The results of the third National Inpatient Experience Survey were issued in November and Saolta has again received very positive feedback, particularly regarding improvements in discharge/transfer. The focus for 2020 will be the roll out of the National Communication Programme and National Advocacy Training for all staff. We will also be launching the Saolta Patient Engagement Strategy in Q2.

Last year we donated 40,150 polio vaccines to UNICEF as part of the "Get a vaccine, Give a Vaccine" initiative. This year our aim is over 65% flu vaccine update for healthcare workers and to donate an even greater number of vaccines. Thank you to the peer vaccinators and flu vaccine champions for continuing to keep the flu vaccine high on the agenda.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Geraldine Murray, DON in GUH who is retiring on 31 December and welcome Marie Burns who will be commencing her new role as DON on 01 January.

Christmas is a time to reflect and remember all our colleagues who no longer are with us. We especially remember their families and their friends at this time. Finally I would like to say thank you to all the nursing and support staff for all their hard work and dedication in 2019 and wish you and your families a Happy and Peaceful Christmas. I look forward to working with you all in 2020.



Jean Kelly, I/CDONM

Focus on Sligo University Hospital

Golden Hip Award



Seated, from left: Aisling Kelly, Theatre CNM; Annmarie Mullen, Staff Nurse/Audit Co-ordinator; Caroline Quinn, CNM3. Standing from left: Darion Gallagher, Occupational Therapist; Dr Grainne O'Malley, Consultant OrthoGeriatrician; Catherine Kelly, Clinical Facilitator, Emergency Department; Shirley O'Brien, CNM Bed Management; Charlie Gillespie, Senior Physiotherapist; Mr Barry O'Neill, Consultant Trauma Surgeon; Regina Mitchell, Theatre CNM; Frank Molloy, Physiotherapist; Anne Judge, Orthopaedic Ward CNM; Dr Anna Pisula, Consultant Anaesthetist; Dr Sinead Bredin, Consultant Anaesthetist; Dr Michael Sweeney, Consultant in Emergency Medicine; Therese Gallagher, ADON; and Grainne McCann, General Manager.

SUH was awarded the 'Golden Hip' award for excellence in the management of hip fractures at the annual Irish Hip Fracture Meeting in the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland in October.

The award is presented to the hospital with the highest proportion of patients managed according to six international standards of care for hip fracture. Sligo is the second Irish hospital to win the award, which was introduced last year, and out-performed all the major orthopaedic centres in the country.

Mr John Kelly, Orthopaedic Surgeon in Sligo said, "In 2018 we treated 139 patients with hip fractures, which are common injuries in older people and can have significant consequences for life and quality of life.

"The optimal management of hip fracture patients relies on extensive collaboration between the Orthopaedic Department and all Departments in the hospital including Emergency Medicine, Anaesthesia, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy and Rehabilitative Medicine."

For more [click here](#)



From left: Regina Mitchell, Theatre CNM; Annmarie Mullen, Staff Nurse and audit co-ordinator; Aisling Kelly, Theatre CNM; Dr Sinead Bredin, Consultant Anaesthetist; Robert Stewart, Theatre Operative; and Mr John Kelly, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon.

Artist in Residence Programme

Andy Parsons has been appointed Artist-in-Residence at Sligo University Hospital in a unique Arts and Health partnership with The Model, Art Gallery funded through the Creative Sligo programme. This is the initial phase of a collaborative arts programme with The Model and Sligo University Hospital.

The residency will offer a range of pop-up events including hands-on creative activities for patients and care-givers through a gentle encounter in the hospital environment. Andy has exhibited widely and won several awards for his work. The programme will run from November 2019 to June 2020.

In addition to the residency, as part of the partnership with the Model, paintings from the collection have been placed in private care areas of the hospital so that patients and families can see them there.



Marie Louise Blaney, Educator Curator from The Model, Sligo; Artist in Residence, Tony Parsons; Ann Hayes, End of Life Care Coordinator, SUH.

Cardiac Arrest Team - 'Meet and Greet'

In June 2018, Deirdre Staunton, the Resuscitation Officer at SUH introduced a 9.30am daily 'Meet and Greet' for cardiac arrest team members. In addition to the test bleep at 9.30am each morning, the message relayed by the bleep, reminds everyone carrying the bleep to meet at a specific area.

Deirdre introduced the daily 'Meet and Greet' to improve group dynamics during cardiac arrest events. As Deirdre explains, "Research indicates that the prolonged process of teambuilding and poor leadership is associated with significant shortcomings in CPR.

"Also, there is an association between team leadership skills and cardiac arrest simulation test scores. Teams led by effective leaders display higher quality CPR, shorter pre-shock pauses, lower hands-off ratio and shorter time to first shock.

"Even though there have been advances in resuscitation training and Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support programmes, there is always room for improvement in healthcare and in SUH our objective is for our cardiac arrest team to make a 'Good Link' every day:

- G** - Go to the appointed area for the meeting
- O** - Offer your name and professional background
- O** - Listen to **O**ther members
- D** - Dispel misconceptions and notions of hierarchy
- L** - Leader established
- I** - Identify team roles
- N** - k**N**ow limitations and voice same
- K** - **K**nowledge sharing opportunity

"After a year of our daily 'Meet and Greet', I carried out a survey to review progress and identified that the meeting occurred 100% of the time.

In total 32 members of the cardiac arrest team completed the survey and 100% confirmed that role allocation that occurs at the 'Meet and Greet' improved their confidence and 93% felt it had a positive influence on their performance.

100% stated that team leadership and individual roles were very clear post the 'Meet and Greet' and 97% found the daily event to be a good opportunity for learning.

"This very simple concept has huge significance in improving the quality of care during cardiac arrest and could easily be rolled out to the other hospitals in the Saolta Group and the other hospitals around the country. I presented a poster on this initiative at the Irish Association for Emergency Medicine Annual Scientific Meeting in Sligo in November".



From left: Catherine Delaney, Tommy McGuinness, Telal Khair, Avinash Radhakrishna, Aisling Finnegan, Ruth McGovern, Carol McKiernan and Deirdre Staunton.

Staff Health and Wellbeing Initiatives

Lunchtime Yoga

Staff wellbeing is one of the key priorities in SUH's Healthy Ireland implementation plan and we are continuously looking at innovative ways of enhancing staff wellbeing to benefit staff, their families and also to impact positively on service users.

Lunchtime programmes rated highly in a survey of staff wellbeing needs and we introduced a weekly yoga class in October. The class was completely oversubscribed with 98 staff registering and so we ran two lunchtime sessions per week from October to December with 20 staff in each. The classes were facilitated by a very experienced yoga instructor Cathi Murphy whose expertise greatly enhanced the experience for all. We will formally evaluate the sessions to inform future programmes; the verbal feedback to date has been overwhelmingly positive.



Lunchtime yoga classes at SUH

The Vocal Chords

The SUH hospital choir has been in existence now for 5 years and is invited to deliver a number of performances over the year.

This year we sang once again in the local Hawk's Well Theatre for Sligo Sings which is a unique opportunity to bring choirs from the workplace and community settings together as one voice and this year had the greatest number of participants.

The choir is always on the lookout for new additions to the group - no experience required and beginners welcome. Contact 071 917 4548 for further details!



Vocal Chords hospital Choir at SUH

Christmas Tree Competition

Some of the entrants for the Christmas Tree Competition at SUH with funds being donated to North West Hospice!



Research and Education Foundation's Research Conference

The 20th annual multidisciplinary research conference organised by the Research and Education Foundation (REF) at SUH took place at the end of November. The event was a huge success with 94 clinicians, allied health professionals and researchers from IT Sligo attending to learn about the research carried out in the North West region. The keynote speakers were Prof Francis Finucane, Consultant Endocrinologist at GUH and Prof Niall Moyna, DCU. Tony Canavan, CEO, Saolta Group gave the closing remarks and presented the poster prizes.

Speaking at the conference Saolta Group CEO Tony Canavan spoke of the importance of creating a research friendly environment and the benefit that brings to patients. He also reflected on its importance in helping attract high calibre staff to our hospitals.

The Foundation works closely with Sligo University Hospital to provide research governance and administrative support, financed by the hospital, for the SUH Research Ethics committee. Other joint aims of the REF, working with SUH, include: multi-disciplinary excellence across the medical sciences; innovating, developing and sustaining improved service quality and delivery; attracting and retaining highly qualified staff; supporting and sustaining CPD; and fostering high quality research and education.

The key achievements of the REF include:

- Development of a library/information centre and education facility, including a lecture theatre, meeting room and refurbishment on Level 6 of the hospital through a public/private partnership with SUH and a ten year loan by the Foundation.
- Provided training programmes, including seminars and the Core Curriculum Programme which included Presentation Skills, Statistical Analysis, Research Project Design, Getting Published, Research Ethics and Poster Design etc. This activity shaped a yearly cycle leading to provision of research seed grants and the annual research day.
- Maintaining and administering a research fund banking facility on behalf of researchers.
- Supported the GP training scheme during the initial programme development phase.
- Public information events including an annual Men's Health symposium with lectures and health checks.

The future strategy and goals of the REF are:

- Consolidation of collaborative relationships with selected regional, national and international partners in the academic, healthcare, health science and community sectors.
- To promote an inclusive, modern, multidisciplinary learning and research environment and to facilitate and empower high-quality collaborative research and innovation.
- To achieve secure and sustainable sources of funding in order for the Foundation to achieve its objectives in an independent and ethical manner.



From left: Prof Nash Patil; Pat Timpson, REF Chair; Prof Francis Finucane; Dr Anna Cleminson; Prof Niall Moyna, DCU; Dr John Williams and Anita Patil, REF Executive Officer at the annual REF research conference.

Buddy Beds



Sligo University Hospital (SUH) is delighted to introduce 21 new buddy beds to the Paediatric Department thanks to individual generous donations and a massive fundraising campaign by the local community.

The fundraising campaign, which began in December 2018, has now resulted in the provision of new buddy beds which are special chairs that convert to comfortable beds allowing for a restful night's stay for a parent or family member.

Orla McDonagh, CNM, Paediatric Unit said, "The 21 buddy beds are vitally important and the benefits are far-reaching with parents and family members having somewhere appropriate to rest and have some semblance of a night's sleep while at the same time being near their child to comfort them."

For more [click here](#).

#OurPeople



Name: Phill Armstrong
Job Title: Finance Manager
Location: Sligo University Hospital

My responsibilities and duties as Finance Manager include staff management which covers the Payroll/Salaries Department, General Payments Department and the Patient Accounts Department. I chair the Income Working Group which supports the hospital on all matters relating to income generation. It is a varied role that also involves working closely with consultants and heads of departments and I liaise with outside agencies, other hospitals, internal audit, the Comptroller and Auditor General and the Department of Health.

I also chair and represent SUH on the Saolta Income and Debt Management Group and I also represent the SUH and Saolta on the national Patient Income Oversight Group.

Describe your job in one sentence? Maximise income, minimise risk, supporting the patient journey.

Most rewarding part of your job?

The most rewarding part of my job is playing a key role as senior manager in the finance department of the hospital. I enjoy my role as Chair to the Income Working Group which is income focused to improving the efficiencies in the area of patient assessment, to review all options for increasing income at the hospital and make recommendations for follow up action across departments as appropriate. To develop and implement policy, procedure, guidelines and training for staff to support income collection in the hospital.

To ensure at all times, that the hospital is in compliance with the National Financial Regulations pertaining to Income and debt management. The Group have developed key performance indicators for the monitoring of income at the hospital, agreed the income targets, review the income management information and make recommendations to maximise income collection at the hospital.

From this role evolved the development of the Saolta Income and Debt Management Group. This group includes finance representatives from all the hospital within the Saolta Group. The group identify common issues across the Group, standardise and implement common group-wide policies, procedures, guidelines, training for staff to support income collection, review areas for developing, improve best practice and efficiencies in relation to debt management, to progress any initiatives identified and develop a support structure/network across the Group for Patient Accounts staff and managers.

The role of income within the hospital and the Group is a crucial requirement to support the financial running of the hospital and to support the budget allocation. The hospitals are providing health care services and the income generated and collected is vital to continue the level of services required.

Last but not least, it is a privilege to lead a team of committed staff where we all work well together to ensure we deliver the best services to staff and patients.



News from the Women's and Children's Directorate

Wave of Light

Members of the Maintenance and Services Department at University Hospital Galway who came together to upgrade the Maternity Garden as part of Pregnancy and Infant Loss month and the greater international 'Wave of Light' celebrations. From left: Aidan Lawlor; John Forde; Mike Feeney; Helen Byrnes, CMM2, St Catherine's Ward; Ray Madden; Anne Brady, CMS, Bereavement and Loss; Martin King; and Hilary Boyle.

LUH Breastfeeding Awareness Session

For National Breastfeeding Week in October, two staff from the Maternity Unit at Letterkenny University Hospital organised an awareness session for future health professionals at Letterkenny IT (LYIT), to highlight the importance of breastfeeding. This was the first time presenting to the second year student nurses at LYIT; in previous years a similar event was organised for transition year students.

The event was led by Clinical Midwife Managers and hospital breastfeeding representatives Geraldine Hanley and Mary Lynch and was supported by the Director of Midwifery, Donegal Breastfeeding Forum and the Department of Nursing and Health Studies, LYIT.

The awareness session was held in the lecture hall at LYIT as part of the second years' health promotion and wellbeing class.



Geraldine Hanley and Mary Lynch with the second year student nurses at LYIT who attended the Awareness Session on Breastfeeding.

World Prematurity Day UHG



Marie Claire Guidera, Laura Gillan, Heather Helen, Deirdre Carroll and Dr Johannes Letshwiti from the Neonatal Unit, celebrating World Prematurity Day in the main hospital foyer at UHG.

Breastfeeding Week PUH

To celebrate National Breastfeeding Week in October, guest speaker Maria Casey and author of 'The Mammy Diaries' gave a talk to staff at the Maternity Unit which highlighted the importance of supporting, promoting and protecting breastfeeding. For more [click here](#).



New X-Ray Equipment in RUH

The newly upgraded X-ray suite at Roscommon University Hospital was officially opened by CEO Tony Canavan at the beginning of December. The project involved refurbishing the existing two X-ray rooms and an investment of over €465,000 in new digital equipment.

Ann Marie Healy, Radiography Services Manager at the hospital explained the significance of the investment for the hospital and patients who are treated there. She said, "We have upgraded our X-ray equipment from conventional radiography to digital radiography which means that the images obtained are of a higher resolution. The images can also be digitally enhanced to improve the image quality and diagnostic possibilities. Essentially the X-rays will provide our clinical staff with more information from a single image.

"In one of the upgraded rooms we have X-ray equipment specifically designed for dental X-rays and we have an X-ray machine identical to the one used in the National Rehabilitation Unit in Dublin. This X-ray machine is designed to be used by patients with mobility difficulties and a low fixed table for wheelchair users who can self-transfer on to the table to have their X-rays taken." For more [click here](#).



Seated from left: Dr James McGarry, Consultant Radiologist, RUH; Dr Clare Roche, Consultant Radiologist, GUH; Tony Canavan, Saolta Group CEO; Mary Garvey, General Manager, RUH; Ann Marie Healy, Radiography Services Manager, RUH; and Dr Rene Kruijt, Consultant Radiologist, RUH. Standing from left, Radiology Department staff Martina Crosbie, Eimear Rea, Marie Conroy and Faith Munnick.

Presentation of a Cuddle Cot to MUH

Following the death of her sister's Orla's son John Paul, Aisling Grier decided to fundraise for a cuddle cot for the Maternity Department at Mayo University Hospital. Aisling along with Patrick McNulty, who both work as managers in the leisure centre in the Twin Trees Hotel Ballina, organised a cake sale and a ten hour spinathon to raise the funds for the cuddle cot. A cuddle cot allows bereaved parents to spend time with their baby to help with the grieving process.



Aisling Grier, and Patrick McNulty



From left: Claire Larkin, CMM2; Edel Sammon, Midwife; Aisling Grier; Patrick McNulty; Andrea McGrail, Director of Midwifery; Sile Gill, ADONM; and Avril O'Connor, Midwife.

GUH - IDDSI Launch

The Speech and Language Department at GUH took part in the worldwide launch of the International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI) in November. This is a new grading system for modified diets/fluids for people with dysphagia, which is the medical term for swallowing difficulties.

The SLT Department worked closely with colleagues in the Catering in both UHG and MPUH to introduce the new way of identifying modified diets/fluids and their support has been essential for the smooth transition to the new system. For more [click here](#).

From left: Kristine Coffey, SLT, Community Healthcare West; Ita O'Brien, Chef Grade 2, MPUH; Maeve McEnroe, SLT, MPUH; Hannah Loughnane, SLT MPUH; Mary Killeen, Catering Manager, MPUH; and Geraldine Keenan, SLT Manager, GUH.



LUH leading Emergency Surgery Research

As part of the Centre for Personalised Medicine, Letterkenny University Hospital is working with Altnagelvin Hospital, Ulster University and Letterkenny Institute of Technology to improve the treatment and care of patients requiring emergency surgery.

The Centre for Personalised Medicine is an EU funded project bringing together 14 academic healthcare providers and partners to develop practical solutions to ensure that patients get the right treatment at the right time. The Centre for Personalised Medicine was awarded €8.6m from the EU's INTERREG VA Programme to carry out this research and the project is being co-ordinated by Ulster University.

'Personalised Medicine' is a move away from the traditional one-size-fits-all approach to treating patients and instead uses genomics testing, technology/ computing and intelligence systems to deliver a more targeted approach according to each patient's needs.

For more [click here](#).



From left: Clinical Research Nurses Louise Flanagan and Carol-Ann Walker; Director of Research, Dr Randal Parlour; Clinical Research Nurse, Alison Johnston; and Administrative Co-ordinator, Donna Sweeney.

Minister for Health visits PUH

Staff from Portiuncula University Hospital welcomed Minister for Health, Mr Simon Harris TD to the hospital in November where he received an update on progress on the new 50 bed ward block.

For more [click here](#).



The Minister with staff on a visit to the Maternity Unit.



From left: Dr Marie Christine De Tavernier, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist/Associate Clinical Director for Women's and Children's Directorate; Brian Mullin, Human Resource Manager/Medical Manpower; Máire Kelly, Clinical Support Services Director; James Keane, General Manager; Minister for Health, Mr Simon Harris TD; Mary Barrett, Acting Director of Nursing; Deirdre Naughton, Director of Midwifery; Denis Minton, Finance Manager; David Walker, Maintenance Supervisor; Prof Gerard Clarke, Consultant Gastroenterologist/Associate Clinical Director for Medicine; Anita Carey, Information Technology Manager; Dr Vincent Parsons, Consultant Radiologist/Associate Clinical Director for Diagnostics; and Tony Canavan, Saolta CEO.

Health Professional of the Year Award at MUH

Therese Gordan, Midwife in Mayo University Hospital was nominated for the 'Healthcare Professional of the Year' award at the Friends of Breastfeeding Awards which took place at a gala ceremony in Clontarf Castle in October, attended by Sabina Higgins, first lady. Congratulations to Therese for her nomination.



Chronic Pain Awareness Day in MPUH

To mark International Chronic Pain Awareness Month, the Physiotherapy Department in Merlin Park University Hospital held a Chronic Pain Awareness Day in September where staff, patients and visitors had the opportunity to meet with physiotherapists who work with people experiencing chronic pain.

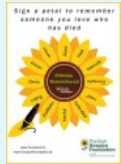
There was huge interest in the day with one couple travelling from Tuam to find out about chronic pain after hearing Anita Kerins, Physiotherapist who was interviewed on Galway Bay FM that morning.

Other events organised on the day included a staff pilates and meditation class and a team coffee morning.

For more [click here](#).



The Physiotherapy Department at Merlin Park University Hospital who held an Awareness Day for International Chronic Pain Awareness Month.



Always Remembered Sunflower Campaign

Portiuncula University Hospital in conjunction with the Irish Hospice Foundation Hospice Friendly Hospital celebrated the Always Remembered campaign in November.

Everyone was welcome to come and sign a petal of a Sunflower to remember someone you love who has died. "Death ends a life, not a relationship" Mitch Albom, *Tuesdays with Morrie*.

Helen Ely, CNS noted "When a loved one dies we can slowly find ways to adjust our relationship with that person. We are creating a bond with that person that will continue as long as we live. Research suggests that continuing this relationship with our loved one can be an important part of managing our grief".



From left: Mary Barrett, ADON; Máire Kelly, Clinical Support Services Director; James Keane, General Manager; Ciara Mulkerns, Social Worker; Helen Ely, CNS in Palliative Care; and Tony Canavan, Saolta CEO.

Opening of Family Room in CCU at UHG

Croí, the Heart and Stroke Charity, recently funded the furnishing and redesign of a new family room for the Coronary Care Unit at University Hospital Galway. For more [click here](#).



Dr Brian MacNeill, Consultant Cardiologist; Kevin O'Reilly, Chairman, Croí; Chris Kane, General Manager and Geraldine Murray, DON at the official opening of the Croí Family Room.



Mrs Mae Reilly from Finea, Co Cavan who was a patient in the Coronary Care Unit earlier this year and whose daughters and sons used the Croí Family Room during her stay, from left: Sinead Duke, CNM; and staff nurses Michelle Munnelly and Katie McCormack.

Parking for the Elderly at RUH

Roscommon University Hospital in association with the hospital's Patient Council and Patient Experience Committee have officially unveiled two new designated parking spaces for older people at the hospital. For more [click here](#).



Members of the Patient Council with Mary Garvey, General Manager; Ursula Morgan, Director of Nursing and Dr Ion Ignea at the unveiling of the new designated parking spaces for older people at the hospital.

16 Days of Action

The Social Work Departments of Galway University Hospital, Portiuncula University Hospital and Galway Roscommon Mental Health Services marked the 16 Days of Action against Domestic which commenced on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, which ran until 10 December, Human Rights Day.

The campaign aims to highlight the prevalence of domestic violence and to create an awareness of the services and support available to persons who experience or have experienced domestic violence.



Sláintecare Heart Failure Integrated Care Project

The Heart Failure Service provided by Portiuncula University Hospital and Galway Primary Care is one of the successful projects to benefit from the €20m Sláintecare Integration Fund announced by Minister for Health, Simon Harris TD in September. The project secured €330k in funding to further develop the Heart Failure Service which is currently being delivered by PUH and Galway Primary Care, in line with the Sláintecare goals of moving care to the community, reducing waiting lists and improving experiences for patients. For more [click here](#).



From left: Grace Gannon, CNM2 Cardiology Services; Dr Chris Mc Brearty, Senior Registrar in Medicine; Catherine Nolan, CNS for Community Cardiovascular/Heart Failure; Dr Aidan Flynn, Consultant Cardiologist; Marita Fogarty, Director of Nursing; James Keane, General Manager and Siobhan Woods, Development Officer, Primary Care.

'Flutober' around the Group



Standing from left: Máire Kelly, Eimear Allis, Richard Sykes, Priscila Neilan, Mary Barrett and Bernie Kilmartin. Seated from left: Neasa Naughton, Emma Helebert who was on the All-Ireland Camogie Team 2019, Deirdre Naughton and Sínead McManus at the 'Flutober' launch in Portiuncula.



GUH Flu launch



LUH Flu launch



MUH Flu launch



RUH Flu launch



SUH Flu launch



UHG Maternity Flu launch

HR Staff Support Day at UHG

On 10 December, University Hospital Galway held a HR Staff Support and Staff Wellness Day, designed as a market place style event to provide a great opportunity for all grades of staff to meet and get information from GUH's HR Department and health professionals covering a wide range of topics. The need for this staff-focused event came about in response to findings of the 2018 Employee Engagement Survey.

There were stands representing all sectors of HR including Employee Relations; Recruitment; Learning and Development; and Manual Handling/Ergonomics.

Other stands included the Occupational Health Department (which offered a flu vaccination clinic); Employee Assistance Programme; Physiotherapy; Daffodil Centre; Croí; Schwartz Round; Mindfulness; and Health Promotion/Healthy Ireland.

The day was well attended and the positive feedback will enable this event to expand in 2020 both for MPUH and UHG.



Tobacco Free Ireland Award for LUH

In September Letterkenny University Hospital received an award from the Tobacco Free Ireland Programme at a Tobacco Free Campus Bursaries Awards Ceremony in the Royal College of Surgeons, Dublin.

As part of the application process, LUH completed an annual tobacco free campus policy audit and submitted a quality improvement plan to support and improve policy implementation.

The bursary of €5,000 awarded to the hospital will be used to further progress the TFC policy implementation and feedback from the managers who reviewed and assessed the LUH application will be used to inform and guide future policy implementation at the hospital.



Dr Fenton Howell, National Tobacco Control Advisor, Department of Health; Elaine Robinson Tobacco Cessation CNS, LUH; and Martina Blake, National Lead Tobacco Free Ireland Programme.

Other News from across the Saolta Group

Options Appraisal and Scoping Study

In November the Saolta Group published two reports: the outcome of the options appraisal process undertaken to identify the most appropriate way to proceed with the future development of hospital services in Galway; and the Regional Elective Hospital Scoping Study

The options appraisal process involved an extensive external assessment and an in-depth analysis of existing infrastructure on both the UHG and MPUH sites with a detailed study of current and future demand for both local and specialist health service requirements in the region. To read more [click here](#).

To read the **Options Appraisal Report**, click here: <https://saolta.ie/documents/options-appraisal-saolta-model-4-hospital-services-0>

To read the **Regional Elective Hospital Scoping Study**, click here: <https://saolta.ie/documents/regional-elective-hospital-scoping-study>



Tony Canavan, CEO; Pat Nash, Chief Clinical Director; and Ann Cosgrove, Chief Operations Officer.

Staff Engagement and Staff Wellbeing

The Saolta Group is the only hospital group to have a dedicated staff member working to support staff in the area of engagement and wellbeing. Elaine Fallon was appointed Saolta Group Lead for Staff Engagement and Staff Wellbeing in February this year and has been working with staff to identify areas for improvement and focus on solutions which can be implemented by local management.

It is a large remit with over 10,000 staff in the Saolta Group and to date Elaine has been working with hospital General Managers, Directors of Nursing and Midwifery, Human Resource Managers and other senior management who have identified the need for support for staff engagement and/or wellbeing. Elaine explains, "I offer workshop-style training, education and staff development in the areas of general staff engagement, dignity at work, promoting and maintaining a work positive environment, effective team building/meetings and so on. Since February I've worked with nurses, midwives, porters, catering staff, administration staff, hospital consultants and their teams, facilities staff and laboratory technicians and I look forward to meeting many more staff.

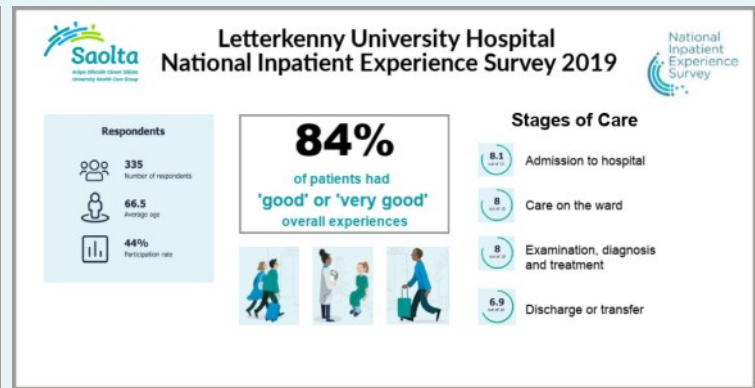
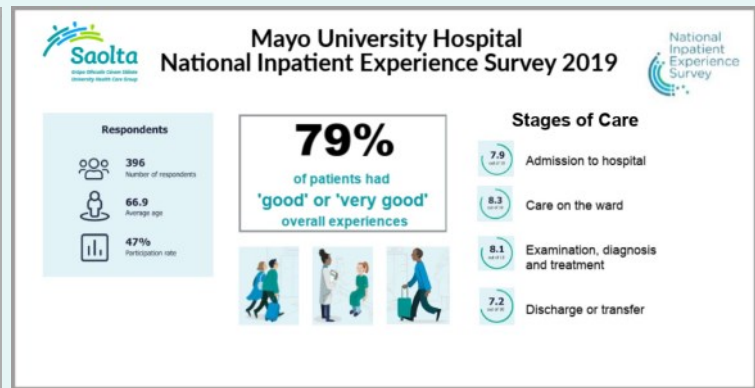
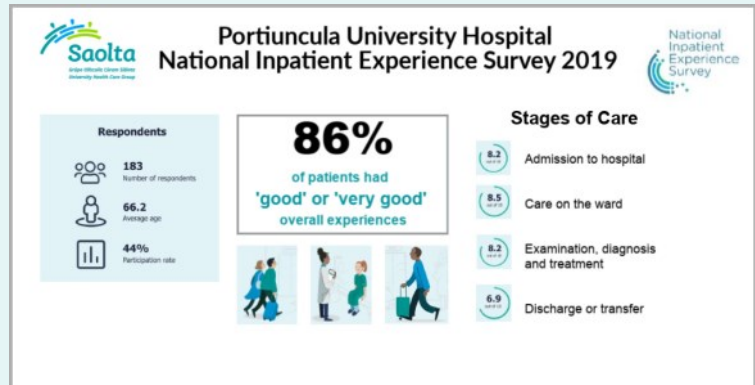
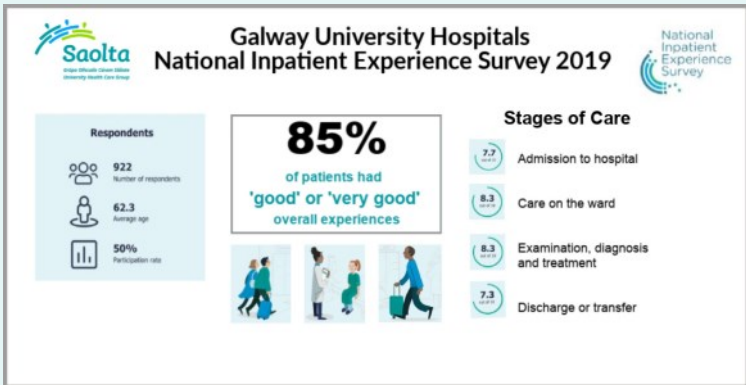
"I really enjoy my role and am delighted with the support from the Group's Executive Leadership Team and their recognition of the importance of the role and the benefits for staff. I have extensive experience in project management, quality improvement, nursing/midwifery leadership, coaching and mentoring and would be delighted to share this experience to benefit staff from all the hospitals in the Group.

"If you have identified a need for staff engagement or staff wellbeing in your area and would like some guidance, please contact me by emailing elaine.fallon@hse.ie."



National Inpatient Survey Results 2019

The results of the inpatient experience survey carried out in all public hospitals in Ireland in May were published at the end of November. This was the third year of the survey which is a joint initiative by HIQA, the HSE and the Department of Health. The aim of the survey is to ask patients about their experiences of care in order to improve the quality of health and social care services in Ireland. The individual results for each hospital are available at www.yourexpertise.ie.



The West of Ireland Diabetes Nurse Specialist Group

Diabetes Clinical Nurse Specialists and Diabetes Advanced Nurse Practitioners working in the Saolta Group and caring for adults and paediatric patients with diabetes mellitus in both primary and secondary care settings met at the recent meeting of the West of Ireland Diabetes Nurse Specialist Group in Westport in November.

The Group meets twice a year to provide peer support and share learning and expertise between centres.



Saolta Surgical Nursing Programme

In November, participants and stakeholders of Community Healthcare West and the Saolta Hospital Group attended the final day of the Leaders in Management Programme. One of the key priorities in the Health Service People Strategy is to enhance the management and leadership capability of health service managers. The evidence on the day with poster presentations of projects completed and the feedback from participants themselves was very positive.

The success of the programme can be attributed to the members of the Leadership Education and Talent Development Team in conjunction with valuable input from stakeholders across the health service and in particular from senior staff in both organisations. The Programme is a vehicle for our managers to build a better health service for the communities we serve and for the colleagues who work with us.



National Diabetes Integrated Care Programme

A meeting between Sláintecare (including Laura Maghy, Executive Director), the national diabetes clinical care programme and the national diabetes integrated care nurse group took place in September. The meeting was held to discuss the current diabetes service and the vision for future diabetes service developments.

Diabetes nurse specialists in integrated care are integral to providing the necessary support to implement of the national diabetes integrated care programme.



HHI Spark Ignite Initiative

The Health Innovation Hub Ireland is delighted to announce that it has an official agreement with the Office of the Nursing and Midwifery Services Director and the National Doctors Training Programme on the second Spark Ignite initiative. Spark Ignite is an opportunity for healthcare staff to put forward their ideas for innovative products or services in healthcare. Successful applicants will benefit from a bespoke healthcare focused innovation workshop to hone their idea and proceed to pitch for funds to develop their idea further. The programme will officially open in Q1 2020.



Saolta Staff Recognition Awards 2019



GUH - Innovation Award



GUH - Outstanding Employee



GUH - Quality Improvement

[Click here](#) for further details - GUH



RUH - Innovation Award

[Click here](#) for further details - RUH



RUH - Outstanding Employee



MUH - Outstanding Employee

[Click here](#) for further details - MUH



PUH - Outstanding Employee



SUH - Research

[Click here](#) for further details - SUH



SUH - Outstanding Employee



LUH - Education

[Click here](#) for further details - SUH



LUH - Outstanding Employee

Update from the Saolta Project Management Office

In this edition of the newsletter the PMO will focus on Sláintecare, the Saolta Integrated Governance Project and the launch of the Options Appraisal Report.

Sláintecare Update

There is much work underway both at a national and local level in the delivery of the Sláintecare programme. The following projects were approved from the Sláintecare Integration Fund with Saolta as the lead partner.

- Telemedicine for Cystic Fibrosis Patients - GUH/CHO 1 and CH West
- Urology Services – Saolta/CHO 1 and CH West
- Heart Failure - PUH/CH West
- Pain Management Programme - SUH/CHO 1
- Electronic Recording for GP lab tests - GUH/Saolta /CH West
- Community Cardiac Diagnostics – GUH/CH West
- Towards Self Care in Headache – National Neurology Programme (GUH as pilot site)

In addition to the above there are 2 jointly managed projects:-

- Older Persons Project - Establishing an Ambulatory Hub-CH West as lead partner but working jointly with Saolta
- Heart Failure Project – Donegal CHO1 working jointly with LUH/Saolta

These projects are proceeding to the next phase of confirmation of grant agreements and recruitment of staff. To support this process, the PMO facilitated change management training for project leads for both the Sláintecare Projects and Saolta Strategy Projects over recent weeks.

Over the coming months work will commence on the configuration of the new Regional Health Areas whereby Saolta will integrate with CHO1 and CH West to form RHA F. Further details of the Sláintecare Programme/ Integration Fund Projects are available from the PMO.



Saolta Integrated Governance Project

The Cancer and Women's and Children's Managed Clinical and Academic Networks (MCANs) will be launched on 15th January 2020. This new development and structure will ensure that our hospitals and individual specialities work more closely together resulting in safer and better patient care across the Hospital Group.



Over the last number of weeks, the PMO has been working with the MCAN teams in the final design and preparation for the launch. In addition, the MCAN Directors and incoming teams have been meeting staff on the individual hospital sites, setting out MCAN priorities for the next number of months and hearing about key issues affecting services across the Saolta Group. A separate newsletter / further information on this is available from the PMO or Saolta Website.

Options Appraisal Project

The Options Appraisal Project (which sets out the future development of hospital services for the Saolta Model 4 Hospital) was launched on November 20th with a presentation to Oireachtas members from the West /North West followed by a local engagement with public representatives. The study concluded that the preferred longer term option is the development of an acute hospital on the Merlin Park site. The Regional Elective Hospital Scoping Study was also launched in line with Government approved policy "Project Ireland 2040" plan published last year and we will be working with Sláintecare to progress this. Both reports are available from the PMO.





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