



Back row from left: Frank Harburn, Saolta Vaccine Programme General Manager; Susan McGinty, Data Quality Lead Roscommon/Mayo Vaccination Centres; Mary Loughnane, Operational Site Manager, Roscommon Vaccination Centre and Ursula Morgan, Director of Nursing, Roscommon University Hospital. Third row from left: Aimee Brady, Administration; Ashley Byrne, Deputy Operational Site Manager; Orla Murray, Administration and Therese Flanagan, Covid Vaccinator. Second row from left: Claire McGeeney, Covid Vaccinator; Siobhan Carthy, Clinical Lead, Roscommon Vaccination Centre and David Needham, IT. Front row from left: Deirdre Harrington, Covid Vaccinator; Jackie Lillis, Administration Lead Saolta Vaccination Programme; and Carol Keane, Covid Vaccinator.

Final COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic at Roscommon Vaccination Centre

The vaccination team would like to thank staff from Roscommon University Hospital and further afield for their support during the last year.

The first vaccine was administered from the Roscommon Vaccination Centre – then located in the Abbey Hotel – on 21 March 2021.

Since then the vaccination team have administered over 52,000 vaccines at clinics in the vaccination centres, to residents and staff of long term care facilities, to healthcare staff, to patients in Roscommon University Hospital and to people who are housebound.

The final vaccination clinic took place on 27 March.



From left: Siobhan Carthy, Clinical Lead with Mary Loughnane, Operational Site Manager.

Saolta Tweets

saoltagroup @saoltagroup

We are incredibly proud of colleagues Louise Ward in Portluc University Hospital who captained @KCIGfa to victory last weekend in the Senior Ladies Club Football All-Ireland and Olivia Divily in #UHG who had an incredible game winning 5pts and player of the match

#Mnásome🏆



Galway LGFA and Ladies Football

11:58 AM · Feb 2, 2022 · Twitter Web App

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4 Retweets 2 Quote Tweets 54 Likes

saoltagroup @saoltagroup

To mark #WorldKidneyDay clinical staff from the Portluc Kidney Clinic hosted an information awareness stand in the hospital today

A very successful event, raising awareness of Chronic Kidney Disease with over 100 people screened for CKD risk factors

Well done #PUH👏👏



World Kidney Day 2022
Portluc University Hospital

Paul O'Hara and 2 others

5:21 PM · Mar 10, 2022 · Twitter Web App

View Tweet activity

1 Retweet 23 Likes

saoltagroup @saoltagroup

📷 Vaccination teams in Sligo, Carrick on Shannon and Letterkenny during children's clinics

✅ Parents of children 5-11 can book a slot for a time that suits, our vaccination teams are working hard to create welcoming, child friendly spaces for families

🔗 bit.ly/3LTTFIQ



HSE Ireland and 8 others

12:08 PM · Feb 25, 2022 · Twitter Web App

View Tweet activity

2 Retweets 1 Like

saoltagroup @saoltagroup

On Sunday 27 March the final #COVID19 vaccination clinic will be held in #Roscommon Vaccination Centre, Golf Links Rd

The team would like to thank the people of Roscommon for their tremendous support which enabled them to deliver over 52,000 vaccines

🔗 bit.ly/3IE7LFg



Ros Civil Defence and 5 others

5:41 PM · Mar 24, 2022 · Twitter Web App

View Tweet activity

2 Retweets 1 Quote Tweet 6 Likes

saoltagroup @saoltagroup

A special mention on #InternationalWomensDay to all the women working in #healthcare. We are extremely proud and grateful; during the many difficult days over the last 2 years you have gone above and beyond for your patients and colleagues. Thank you all💖

#IWD2022 ✨ #BreaktheBias



9:23 AM · Mar 8, 2022 · Twitter Web App

View Tweet activity

4 Retweets 1 Quote Tweet 22 Likes

saoltagroup @saoltagroup

All ready to go at London Healthcare Job Fair @HcJobFair!!! We are really excited to meet with nurses and midwives talk to them about opportunities in the stunning West of Ireland

#Belong
saolta.ie/belong



ChiefNurse

10:00 AM · Mar 26, 2022 · Twitter for Android

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13 Retweets 2 Quote Tweets 54 Likes



Chief Executive Officer Saolta Group

Dear colleagues

On 29 March, 296 patients across the Saolta Group were COVID-19 positive. On that same day, all of our hospitals were managing COVID-19 outbreaks, one of our hospitals was managing a Flu outbreak and unfortunately all of our EDs were extremely busy in terms of attendances and patients awaiting admission on trollies. In the background we have the growing waiting lists of patients whose care has been delayed further over the course of the last two years. I think we could all be forgiven for heaving a sigh of relief at the end of January when we started to see 'the numbers' coming back down after the 4th wave. Little did we expect that they would rise so high again and so quickly.

I wouldn't normally paint such a negative picture for the staff newsletter, but it is important that we are honest with regard to the real difficulties being experienced by our patients and also by you.

The HSE has recently published its approved Service Plan for 2022 and the Saolta Group will shortly complete our Operational Plan based on this. Both plans will detail the level of service that we will provide over the remainder of this year in respect of the resources that have been allocated to us. Both will also have an over-arching theme of ongoing reform of our health services through the implementation of Sláintecare, the development of Enhanced Community Care services and the development of the Regional Health Areas. In addition to the theme of reform, there will also be a focus on the need to expand capacity within the health services. Additional physical capacity is a must for our hospitals as is the need to have sufficient staff to care for the growing numbers of patients that are coming through our doors.

As I reflect now on the impact of the 4th wave of Covid, and indeed the impact of the current wave, the importance of delivering on the reform commitment and the additional capacity so badly needed within our services is very clear.

Many of you will be aware that we had an Administrative Board of Directors in place since 2012 in the Saolta Group. In December 2021, the Minister decided not to renew the terms of office of the Hospital Group Boards around the country. This is in line with the next phase of the reform of the HSE and to allow for the setting up of the new regional health structures. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Board Members for the hard work and commitment and to wish them well.

Tony Canavan
Chief Executive Officer



Tony Canavan, CEO

Chief Operations Officer Saolta Group

Dear colleagues

As we approach Easter, we do so with a hope that we are emerging from the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic. For two years you have all worked tirelessly through unprecedented and challenging times.

The dedication and determination shown by each and every one of you is what has brought us through. You all should be proud of the incredible work you have achieved in such trying circumstances.

I realise as I am saying this that all of our Emergency Departments and emergency admission pathways are under immense pressure. Staffing levels are still impacted by COVID-19 creating many stresses in the system, but I have to ask, despite the pressures you are facing, that you continue in your professional, committed approach to meet the needs of our patients.

Two years after we first encountered COVID-19 it is time to look forward with a fresh positivity while reflecting on the great work and achievements we have made despite the pandemic. The implementation of the Enhanced Community Care (ECC) Programme continues with significant staff resources allocated to support this huge change in the delivery of HSE services in the area of cardiology, respiratory, diabetes and diagnostic services. The rollout of these enhanced community services is a very important joint development with strong integrated working between Community Healthcare West, CHO1 and Saolta.

Saolta has also received next phase capital approvals to progress a wide range of projects including the Emergency Department / Acute Medical Assessment Unit at MUH, ward blocks in Portlinculla University Hospital and Sligo University Hospital, the ED women's and children block at UHG, an outpatient department at MPUH and the expansion to the Renal Dialysis Unit in LUH. We also received €10.28m to replace key equipment across the sites.

Roscommon University Hospital will operationalise the Palliative Care Unit a little later this year.

The international recruitment programme is well underway. In January 123 nurses started with the group, with a further 58 nursing and midwifery posts due to be filled this month. This major recruitment programme will continue throughout April and May.

In relation to ICT implementation, the IPMS rollout continues with the SUH implementation of IPMS planned for quarter 3, 2022. A new E-Health Director has also been appointed and will take up office at the end of April.

Finally I wish you all a very Happy Easter and I hope that you get some time off at some stage over the Easter period.

Ann Cosgrove
Chief Operations Officer



Ann Cosgrove, COO

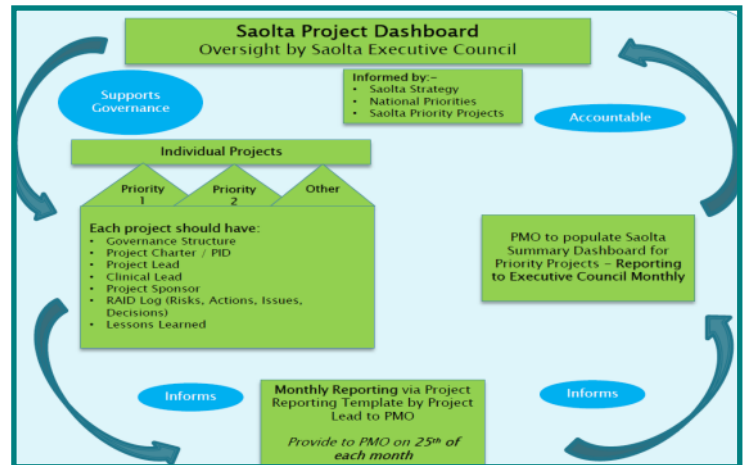
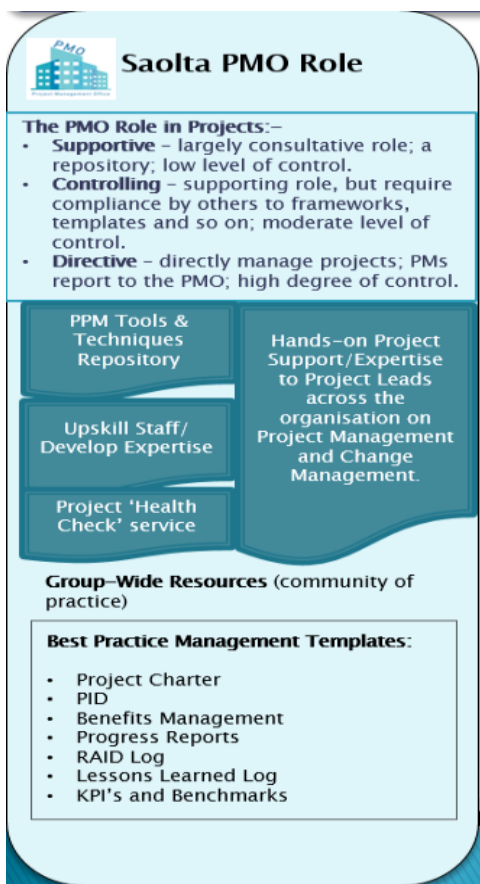
Update from the Saolta Project Management Office

For 2022, the PMO has a busy programme of work in supporting Saolta to progress key priorities across our hospitals. These include scheduled care, unscheduled care, the Enhanced Community Care Programmes (ECCP), capital programmes and Quality and Patient Safety.

A core objective for 2022 will also focus on further developing change management expertise across our organisation. We are working closely with the National Change and Innovation Function and our colleagues in both **Community Healthcare Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo** (CHO1) and **Community Healthcare West** PMOs. This work will be based on the national change guide and aligned to differing requirements from those working at the front line in embracing change management and service improvement. Further details will follow.

A revised process for the oversight and monitoring has been implemented to ensure a programmatic approach around all priority Saolta Projects with a monthly reporting process to the Hospital Group Executive Council. A positive virtual Information session on revised reporting process and project management tools was held in early February for Project Leads and we intend to organise a number of these sessions throughout the year.

Saolta PMO Role



Enhanced Community Care

In collaboration with our CHO colleagues, Saolta PMO is continuing to support the rollout of the **Integrated Care Programme for Older People (ICPOP)** and the **Integrated Care Programme for Chronic Disease (ICPCD)** under the ECCP. This major investment programme in community services will result in a number of community based hubs across the region to support the Sláintecare aim of care as close to home as possible and hospital avoidance where appropriate and safe.

In Saolta/Community Healthcare West, the Cardiology, Respiratory and Diabetes Integrated Care Implementation Groups chaired by the Saolta Clinical leads—Prof Jim Crowley, Prof Anto O'Regan and Prof Sean Dinneen are developing integrated care pathways for the priority areas identified by each disease group. The ICPOP Local Implementation Groups are now established for each ICPOP hub area and induction and on-boarding of new staff is being led by the Operational Leads.

Community Diagnostics, Patient Engagement, Health and Wellbeing, ICT, Work Force and GP Engagement are being addressed through joint fora between Saolta and Community Healthcare West to progress the Models of Care.

Work has also commenced on the Community Healthcare Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo /Saolta Programme (Phase 2 programme) in establishing the structures and programmes.

Saolta Project Reporting

The Saolta Strategy Dashboard reset process has been completed. The purpose of this is to ensure that the Saolta programmes of work are re-aligned to both local and national key priorities post COVID-19.

Projects have been aligned to the following categories:

Priority 1: Highest Priority Projects with national/service implications

Priority 2: Prioritised Important Projects with full commitment/ approval to proceed

Projects to be re-scoped



Women's and Children's Managed Clinical and Academic Network (MCAN)

We are progressing with priorities for 2022 in the development of patient services and supported by projects endorsed by the Executive Council in December 2021. To support the Executive Council reporting and oversight process, project leads have been assigned and will report monthly progress achievements and deliverables. Here is a brief update on some of the work in progress.

CLINICAL CARE PROJECTS

Portlincula University Hospital and University Hospital Galway Maternity Services Integration Project

The National Maternity Strategy (2016-2026) and The Walker Report (2018) strongly advocated for the establishment of Maternity Networks recognising that "smaller maternity services cannot, and should not, operate in isolation as stand-alone entities". It was further recommended that the Saolta Group establish a maternity network to allow the sharing of expertise within the network in order to strengthen the operational resilience of smaller units such as PUH and to enable such units to be supported so as to provide safe, quality services.

Clear deliverables have been identified to ensure that progress regarding the implementation of these can be monitored, and the impact measured:

- 1) Shared Governance of PUH/GUH Maternity Services – one service, two sites
- 2) Workforce development
- 3) Assurance of Clinical Governance
- 4) Standardised Clinical Care Pathways
- 5) Clinical risk stratification
- 6) Improved communication
- 7) Robust Integrated Teams
- 8) Shared Service user Engagement
- 9) Informatics

A series of workshops have taken place on both sites to glean input from staff on the objectives above. This has yielded invaluable information on how integration is viewed by a wide range of staff on both sites. This project will be implemented in 2022 and fully embedded in 2023.

Saolta Critically Ill & Injured Child Project (SCIICP)

This project commenced in December 2021. The aim is to ensure that robust structures, systems, processes and resources are available in the Saolta Group to effectively manage critically ill and injured children. The objectives of the project will be achieved through the following work streams and leads:

- 1) **Governance:** S. Horkan, Director of Paediatric Nursing, W&C MCAN.
- 2) **Pathways of Care:** K. Cunningham, Consultant Emergency Medicine, SUH.
- 3) **Education & Training:** R. Cooke, Consultant Paediatrician PUH
- 4) **Transfer:** M. Callaghan, Consultant Anaesthetist, UHG.
- 5) **Tools:** K. Leonard, Paeds QI, W&C MCAN.
- 6) **Smart Pump:** A. Mohan, Business Manager, W & C MCAN.

Each work stream is supported by multidisciplinary representation from the hospital sites and site based teams working under the Steering Group. This is a very ambitious

project and the drivers of implementation on each site will be via the local Critically Ill and Injured Child groups which are in the process of being established on all sites. Regular updates on the progress will be provided.

STRATEGY

The **Saolta Integrated Paediatric Strategy** is ongoing with engagement from key stakeholders involved in the safe provision of care and service developments for these paediatric patients. We expect to launch this strategy early in 2022 in alignment with the Saolta Strategy 2019 – 2023.

GOVERNANCE

Dedicated networking for the future vision of the women's and children's services will see a shift toward information sharing with dedicated network development in Meetings Management:

- **Saolta Paediatric Steering Group** held its first meeting on 11 February, with a focus on governance, MCAN role description, Data collection and QPS (ED Pathway).
- **Saolta Neonatology Steering Group** is well into its 2nd year and has welcomed guest speakers, data reporting, standardisation of guidelines and Patient/Family Centred experience as monthly agenda items.
- **Saolta Maternity Steering Group** held its first meeting on 11 February where Professor Morrison outlined the new format of the Maternity Steering Group going forward. Terms of Reference, aims of the meeting and data collection were discussed.
- **Paediatric Diabetes Network Meeting.** The network has had bi-annual meetings in 2019 and monthly virtual meetings restarted since October 2020. This accelerates improvement by enabling participants to adopt or adapt successful practices in their own context rather than developing them from scratch. Saolta hosted an interactive Diabetes Network Meeting on 18 February proving to be an effective tool for sharing information, for example, individual patient action plans for children in schools.

PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE

We have been working with GUH, MUH and LUH to develop and capture a suite of 22 KPIs for the **Ambulatory Gynaecology** clinic which has been accepted by NWIHP and will begin capture from March 2022. They range from activity, quality and safety to patient outcome.

There is a national drive to establish HSE Fertility Services across the jurisdiction. The newly established **Saolta Reproductive Medicine Service** will be a tertiary referral service (hub) based on the UHG site for the spoke sites in the Saolta Group.

A Project Team was convened in April 2021 to work to deliver the aim "to establish a tertiary referral Reproductive Medicine (Fertility) Service according to international standards and best practice". Funding has been allocated by NWIHP to establish the service.

All elements of the project plan are progressing and the start date is planned for 4th April 2022. We are also currently working on a final draft of KPI's with the Consultants for the Regional Fertility Service that will coming to GUH in April 2022.

Cancer Managed Clinical and Academic Network (MCAN)



From left: Pauline McGough, Business Manager; Emer Hennessy, Cancer Centre Research Manager; Helen O'Reilly, OECl Co-ordinator; and Louise Carmody, Data Manager.

The Saolta Cancer Programme provides an extensive programme of cancer care for the Saolta region, delivered from the designated cancer centre at University Hospital Galway with an integrated network of cancer care delivered at the other Saolta Group hospitals - Letterkenny University Hospital, Mayo University Hospital, Portlinculla University Hospital, Sligo University Hospital and Roscommon University Hospital.

Complex surgery, complex systemic anti-cancer therapy and radiation oncology is delivered at UHG, the model 4 hospital for the region, with an extensive programme of systemic anti-cancer treatment delivered at LUH, MUH, PUH and SUH. LUH also provides an integrated breast cancer programme for the North West with close linkages to Galway. LUH works closely with our cross border partners in the Radiotherapy Department in Altnagelvin Hospital enabling Donegal patients to receive their radiation treatment in a location that is as close to their home as possible.

The Saolta Cancer MCAN continues to work to augment the cancer programme for our region, but like every other programme remains challenged by the current environment. The pandemic has added to an already burdened system but despite all of this, the Saolta Cancer Programme continues to find ways to address waiting lists and enhance service provision across the region, due primarily to our skilled, caring and committed staff who have worked tirelessly through the pandemic and the cyber-attack to deliver quality care to patients. The Saolta Cancer MCAN wishes to acknowledge and thank all those staff who have provide excellent care to our patients and who continue to do so, despite the challenges.

Key Cancer MCAN achievements to date

- Saolta Cancer Programme recently became a member of the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECl).
- Saolta cancer infrastructure included in the National Development Plan 2021 – 2030.
- Established a Training Needs analysis for cancer nursing across the Saolta Group.
- Secured a number of key posts for cancer care across our region through the NCCP Service Plan 2021.
- Established a Cancer Nursing Research Group which met for the first time in January 2022.

Cancer Service Priorities for 2022

- Engage in the OECl accreditation and designation quality assurance journey for the cancer programme.
- Support local stakeholders, to explore and implement all options to address waiting lists created by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In line with balanced regional development, progress the infrastructural requirements for cancer for the Saolta Hospital Group, as outlined in the National Development Plan 2021 – 2030.
- Deliver an Annual Report and an Annual Cancer Centre Symposium.

The Cancer MCAN is delighted to welcome Pauline McGough, Business Manager; Helen O'Reilly, OECl Co-ordinator; Louise Carmody, Data Manager and Emer Hennessy, Cancer Centre Research Manager to the Cancer MCAN team and wish them well in their new roles. Again, we wish to thank all staff right across our region who deliver cancer care seamlessly to our patients on an ongoing basis.

Clinical Simulation and Interprofessional Education Facility

A state-of-the-art medical training facility spanning more than 1000m² with more than 20 immersive learning rooms fitted out to hospital standard and simulating all aspects of a leading healthcare environment was officially launched by Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD on Friday 04 March.

Based at NUI Galway's Clinical Science Institute, on the grounds of University Hospital Galway, it is the largest and most modern facility of its kind on a clinical site in Ireland. The facility is a partnership between NUI Galway and Saolta University Health Care Group.

NUI Galway's Clinical Simulation and Interprofessional Education Facility is unique in its co-location on a clinical site and medical school. It includes:

- Skills labs, operating theatres, ICU space, emergency bays, in-patient wards, outpatient consultation rooms, delivery suites.
- Complex manikins range in age from premature infants to adults and maternity manikins simulate pregnancy and childbirth.
- Audio-visual system for recording training, streaming and linking to all areas of Saolta University Health Care Group
- Education and training for more than 600 medical students in clinical years and accessible space for more than 4,000 multi-professional clinical staff in Galway University Hospitals.
- Observational rooms with one-way glass and multi-functional rooms with mobile furniture, easily switching from clinical to tutorial and debrief rooms.

The official opening took place alongside the launch of the National Strategic Guide for the Implementation of Simulation on Clinical Sites which provides a framework for the resourcing and delivery of sustainable simulation that is multi-professional with a focus in team training for patient safety. It identifies the priority areas that should be addressed in establishing and delivering high quality healthcare simulation facilities, including human factors testing of new hospital equipment and medical devices before introduction to the clinical environment, of particular importance to the medtech industry in Galway.

To read more, click [here](#).

Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD; Prof Martin O'Donnell, Dean of NUI Galway College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences; Professor of Simulation Education Dara Byrne, School of Medicine, NUI Galway and Saolta University Health Care Group; Dr Brian Kinirons, Director of NDTP; Tony Canavan, CEO, Saolta University Health Care Group; NUI Galway President, Professor Ciarán Ó hÓgartaigh; Prof Helen Whelton, Chief Academic Officer, South / South West Hospitals Group; Prof Paul Burke, Chief Academic Officer, UL Hospitals Group; and Professor Anthony O'Regan, Chief Academic Officer, Saolta University Health Care Group and NUI Galway.



NUI Galway President, Professor Ciarán Ó hÓgartaigh; Professor of Simulation Education Dara Byrne, School of Medicine, NUI Galway and Saolta University Health Care Group; Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD; Chris Kane, General Manager, Galway University Hospitals; and Tony Canavan, CEO, Saolta University Health Care Group.



Minister Donnelly with Philip Parackal Augusthinose, Simulation Clinical Nurse Educator CNM3 and Medical Student Shauna Moore Davis.



Thank you from the Flu Vaccination Programme

On behalf of the team behind the rollout of the flu vaccine this year I would like to thank all the staff who availed of the flu vaccine and all the staff in the hospitals and colleagues from the vaccination centres who supported the programme.

The last few months have been challenging for us all, notwithstanding the previous 18 months and those challenges. I think the final few months of last year and the first few months of this year were a challenge of a different kind. Where there was real fatigue with the pandemic, with the unease of restrictions being imposed and lifted and re-imposed, learning about and dealing with the latest variant, the sense of 'will it ever end?'. And vaccine fatigue – so many doses, so many changes of intervals between doses and then we needed a booster. So for so many staff to take time to get the flu vaccine on top of all the other demands was fantastic.

As a result of your participation in the flu vaccination programme, we donated over €6,000 to UNICEF for their 'Get a Vaccine, Give a Vaccine' campaign and this money will go to providing polio vaccines (two doses) to 7,240 children. Owen Buckley from UNICEF Ireland said, "We greatly appreciate Saolta University Health Care Group's support for UNICEF's polio vaccination programmes. In light of the recent global backsliding in routine childhood immunisation and with the recently confirmed case of wild polio in Malawi, the need to strengthen these programmes has taken even greater urgency."

Finally, congratulations to all the winners of the gift cards and the holiday vouchers in each of the hospitals!

Paul Hooton, Chief Director of Nursing and Midwifery



LUH staff put a Spring in their step!



The staff at Letterkenny University Hospital are gearing up for a 6-week walking programme which began on Tuesday 29 March. The programme is running at lunchtime every Tuesday and Thursday and is facilitated by a trained walking leader provided by Donegal Sports Partnership. Paul Friel, Senior Health Promotion Officer at LUH believes there is a huge opportunity for staff to meet and unwind in a comfortable environment. He said, "Walking is free, has proven to reduce stress and is a social outlet for many people. By changing the work environment to include accessible walking routes, we can help raise awareness of the many benefits of physical activity to our overall health and wellbeing."

"The national Physical Activity Guidelines recommend adults should get at least 30 minutes of physical activity five times a week and with Letterkenny Town Park on the doorstep of LUH, staff can avail of a safe, secure and guided programme to engage in both moderate or vigorous physical activity."

"All levels are welcome and we encourage staff to bring a family member, friend or work colleague, if they so wish. Participants can join at any time throughout the 6 weeks as it's a 'come and try' approach to physical activity."

To join the programme or to find out more, email paul.friel@hse.ie or telephone 087-1198766.

Early Supported Discharge Stroke Programme at SUH

This is a service exclusively for people who have had a stroke. It provides specialised post-stroke rehabilitation, within the person's own home. It is similar to inpatient rehab however it is based at home. The purpose is to enable patients to be discharged home earlier, without losing out on the benefits of rehabilitation to maximise their independence and quality of life. Research has proven that people rehab better in their own homes. International studies show that ESD is effective, that 25-40% of all stroke patients can benefit from ESD programmes (Fearon & Langhorne, 2012) and that these services are cost effective. Rehabilitation is provided by a stroke specialist multi-disciplinary team comprised of a Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, Clinical Nurse Specialist and Medical Social Worker. Based on individualised need, therapy is goal directed and delivered Monday to Friday for up to 6 weeks. Patients are selected according to strict criteria to ensure that only patients who are likely to benefit are accepted. ESD is a pilot project funded by the HSE Winter funding.

Goals of ESD

- Identify suitable inpatients and provide opportunity for early discharge
- Develop an ethos of enhanced rehabilitation post-stroke
- Discharge people to their own homes as soon as possible
- Focus on expediting discharges to enhance patients flow
- Improve patients' outcomes

Benefits of ESD

- Improve disability outcomes for stroke patients
- Reduces likelihood of long term care post stroke
- Improved quality of life
- Reduced length of hospital stay for stroke patients
- Improved discharge process home
- Reduction in post stroke hospital re-admission rate
- Reduced carer burden



Joey Hanley, Medical Social worker; Dr Paula Hickey, Consultant Geriatrician; Clinical Lead for Stroke; Margaret Carney, Stroke CNS; Lisa Conlon, Senior Physiotherapist; Emma Brady, Senior Occupational Therapist; Dorothy Nolan-Shaw, Senior Speech and Language Therapist.

World Kidney Day

World Kidney Day which took place recently aims at raising awareness of the importance of our kidneys and encourages everyone to be aware of the disease and actively know your own kidney health.

Dr Paul O'Hara, Consultant General Physician and Nephrologist in Portlucan University Hospital said, "Education is a key part of managing any chronic illness and kidney disease is no different. World Kidney Day allows us to highlight the importance of screening for Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) in high risk groups, including all patients with diabetes, obesity (Body Mass Index >30) and hypertension. I encourage everyone to protect their kidneys by stopping smoking, eating a healthy diet low in salt, exercising daily, having regular health checks for diabetes and high blood pressure and avoiding prolonged use of anti-inflammatory pain killers. In those with advanced kidney failure and who are suitable, transplantation remains the best treatment option. The act of organ donation is a life-saving event and everyone is encouraged to carry an organ donor card and discuss their wishes with their loved ones.

"I started the Portlucan Kidney Clinic in December 2021 to serve the needs of patients with kidney problems within the hospital catchment area, mainly East Galway and Roscommon and we deal with the entire spectrum of kidney conditions with referrals from both the hospital and GPs. Patients with kidney transplants and those who are on haemodialysis are cared for in the main centre in Galway University Hospitals."

Staff from Merlin Park University Hospital also held an information stand to raise awareness of Kidney Health. From left, Emma Pendergast, Clinical Nurse Specialist in Chronic Kidney Disease and Lorna Durack, Clinical Nurse Manager 2, Home Dialysis.



Staff from PUH from left: Grace Gannon, Advanced Nurse Practitioner Cardiology; Dr Paul O'Hara, Consultant General Physician and Nephrologist and Hilda Clarke, Clinical Nurse Specialist Diabetes.



Staff Recognition Awards at MUH



Congratulations to all the winners of the 2021 Staff Recognition Awards at Mayo University Hospital.

Over 100 nominations were received and the words and examples shared really reflected what an amazing group of people we have at MUH.

Remembrance and Recognition Exhibition at GUH

Staff working in University Hospital Galway and Merlin Park University Hospital have contributed to an evocative exhibition, sharing their thoughts and reflections on the COVID-19 pandemic.

The exhibition is on display in the Arts Corridors in UHG and in MPUH until the end of April.

The announcement in January of a national Day of Remembrance and Recognition prompted a group of staff to organise an event as a hospital community which would acknowledge both the personal and professional experience of the pandemic.

Margaret Flannery, Saolta Arts Director was one of the staff involved in arranging the exhibition. She said, "A call went out to colleagues to come forward with prose, poetry, photographs or whatever medium they would like to use to tell their story, of their experience of the pandemic.

"What we received was eclectic, representing the genuine fear, fatigue and pride of hospital staff. It is good to know that despite the trauma of the past two years there is also a little humour."

Anne McKeown, End of Life Care Co-ordinator at the hospital said, "We asked staff to share some of their experiences from the early days of fear of the unknown to the relief of vaccination, the highs and lows and the effect it had on themselves, their family and work colleagues.

"It is fair to say that there are some staff who are not yet able to talk about their experience of the pandemic. However, all the exhibits are displayed anonymously so that those viewing them are able to identify with the sentiment, rather than the person."

Here are some examples:

"What is Covid-19, are we going to get it and die? Are we going to bring this home with us? The fear at first, everyone was in the same boat, nobody knew what was coming. Day by day, each day, there was new policy drawn up, PPE training, donning and doffing, what masks to use, the extra cleaning which had to be done on everything that we touched - lifts, door handles, light switches, release buttons on doors and lifts. Every point we touched making sure we were clean moving on to our next jobs. The fear was the biggest part at the start for us and our families. But also for the patients, who we met from day one to the day they left to go home or those patients who unfortunately died due to COVID-19, may they rest in peace."

"The quote 'If you enlist you must march' was very relevant in those early days. While it was not necessary for me at any time to be knowingly in close contact with a COVID-19 patient, I will always appreciate those that knowingly did so unseen without hesitation day in day out in those early pre vaccination days. They are real heroes - we salute them."

Saolta Arts runs the west of Ireland's leading Arts and Health programme as a means of improving the hospital experience for patients, staff and visitors. We believe access to the arts promotes well-being and enhances the hospital environment. This project is an initiative under the Healthy Ireland Plan, HSE Staff Health and Wellbeing. We gratefully acknowledge funding from Saolta University Health Care Group and the HSE.

For further information contact Margaret Flannery, Saolta Arts at margaret.flannery@hse.ie or Anne McKeown, End of Life Care Co-ordinator at anne.mckeown@hse.ie



From left: Johnny Tierney, Mortuary Dept; Miriam Conry, Social Work Dept; Colette Fallon, FOI Co-ordinator; and Fr John O'Halloran, Chaplain.



Arts Corridor in Merlin Park above and Arts Corridor in UHG below.



Minister for Health visits UHG



Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly TD on a visit to University Hospital Galway in March.

Leadership Education at SUH

A leadership training programme to help staff at Sligo University Hospital develop their leadership skills has been devised using the ONMSD and National Leadership Centre Framework for Leadership. It incorporates teamwork, leadership styles, and leadership versus management, communication and emotional intelligence. The day concludes with mindfulness exercises. The programme was submitted to NMBI and is accredited for 6 CEUs. The day is facilitated by Ms Mary Durkin, ADON Night Services; Ms Teresa Donnelly, ADON NPDU; Ms Moya Wilson, Quality and Safety Manager, SUH; and Dr Elizabeth Gethins, Consultant Psychiatrist, SUH. To date over 40 nurses and midwives have completed the day.

Leadership in healthcare is essential to foster a culture of continual learning and improvement. We must equip and support our leaders in all care environments and at all levels of organisations to really embed *Compassion in Practice*.

There is a clear relationship between strong leadership, a caring and compassionate culture and high quality care. We all have a role to play in providing strong compassionate leadership within and across teams, across organisational boundaries and to our leaders.

The importance of effective healthcare leadership is difficult to overestimate as leadership not only improves major clinical outcomes in patients, but also improves provider wellbeing by promoting workplace engagement and reducing burnout. We must also ensure that leaders are representative of a culture that ensures patients are always at the centre of care planning and delivery and where staff are supported to deliver the care. Therefore it is important to support our leaders and empower them.

“A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.” – John C. Maxwell.



Retirement after 44 years at PUH

Maura Darcy came to PUH as a Chef in 1978 and after a long 44 years of dedicated service Maura finally hung up her chef's apron on the 14 March 2022.

Maura was a valued member of the catering department and will be missed hugely by her work colleagues and friends in Portiuncula University Hospital.

We wish Maura a long, healthy and happy retirement with her husband Joe and family.



PUH and RUH welcome new nurses

Céad míle fáilte to our new nurses who have joined the nursing teams at Portiuncula University Hospital and Roscommon University Hospital.



New nursing staff at PUH.



New nursing staff at RUH.

PUH Implements National Incident Management System

Implementation of direct electronic Point of Occurrence Entry (ePOE) onto the National Incident Management System (NIMS) for both clinical and non-clinical incidents occurring in PUH was launched on 25 January.

NIMS will support PUH's clinical and management teams to review and investigate incidents in accordance with the HSE Incidence Management Framework (2020).

Tom Dyer, Quality and Patient Safety Manager explains, "The State Claims Agency has a statutorily mandated risk management role within the HSE by providing the NIMS platform to support incident management processes within public sector organisations. The aim of the project from a national perspective is to implement direct electronic Point of Occurrence Entry (ePOE) of all incidents onto NIMS across all hospital sites in Saolta. By making incident reporting more accessible, timely and reducing the burden of double entering incidents onto different systems, staff will find it easier to report such events and engage with it. This will further help improve patient and staff safety by supporting wider system learning.

"The data informatics and analysis capabilities embedded within the NIMS system will provide real time data on incidence occurrence/near misses and initiate prompt review and risk mitigation processes.

Subsequently, this will support the monitoring of KPI's in patient safety and initiate organisational quality improvement initiatives within PUH.

"The Quality and Patient Safety team in PUH have worked closely with the representatives from the NIMS national implementation team including Brid-Ann O'Shea and Tara Nolan, NIMS Project Team, National Quality and Patient Safety Directorate; Lorraine Schwanberg, Assistant National Director in Incident Management, HSE; and John McElhinney, Saolta Group Quality & Patient Safety Manager to successfully launch the system."



From left: Tom Dyer, QPS Manager; Caroline Cuniffe, QPS Facilitator; Beatrice Smith, QPS Administrator and Chris McBrearty, Quality Improvement Lead.

International Women's Day at RUH

On 08 March Roscommon University Hospital celebrated International Women's Day and used the occasion to say 'thank you' to all the amazing women in RUH for their dedication and hard work particularly over the last year.

A display area was created in the main area of the hospital with inspirational quotes for the day as well a free draw open to all the wonderful ladies in RUH.

There was a tremendous response to the draw and the first prize, a bouquet of flowers, was won by Kerrie Connell, Catering Assistant at RUH.



PUH Happy Heart Gold Award

The Catering Department at PUH have received the prestigious Gold Happy Heart Healthy Eating Award from the Irish Heart Foundation for the third time.

In order to achieve this, an independent catering audit was undertaken by Irish Heart Foundation. This involved an assessment of overall food choice, counter layout, food preparation practices and menus including the measures which had been undertaken to reduce fat, sugar and salt and to increase fibre, fruit and vegetables and assess portion sizes.

Trish O'Donoghue, Catering Manager said, "This award recognises the ongoing commitment and hard work of the catering staff in PUH in ensuring that the food we create continuously meets the recommended guidelines set out by the Irish Heart Foundation and The Department of Health.

"The dedicated team of chefs in PUH are all about offering fresh food and fresh ingredients to ensure that our patients, patrons and staff have good healthy food. The ethos of the catering team is to offer healthy, varied, nutritious food and remember that healthy or low fat does not mean flavourless, only creativity, and we have that in abundance in our catering team."



Patricia O'Donoghue, Catering Manager and Jack Kelly, Head Chef.



Honorary Degree Award



Huge congratulations to Jean Kelly, retired Saolta Chief Director of Nursing and Midwifery, who was awarded an Honorary Degree by NUI Galway on 31 March in recognition of her immense contribution to Nursing and Midwifery. More recently Jean has played a key role in the delivery of the COVID-19 vaccination programme with more than 250,000 vaccines administered by the Galway team to date.



Jean Kelly with former colleagues from left: Siobhan Canny, Olive Gallagher, Marie Corbett, Mary Moggan, Marie Burns and Fiona McHugh.



Jean Kelly with Tony Canavan.

Irish National Early Warning System at MUH



INEWS2 was launched in February in Mayo University Hospital. Staff attendance and engagement was great with lots of positive feedback and learning. The Irish National Early Warning System (INEWS) now refers to an early warning 'system' rather than an early warning 'score'. This is a major change where the focus is on ensuring a whole system response is in place to anticipate, recognise, escalate, respond and evaluate the clinically deteriorating adult patient.

Continence Care Education

In line with Sláintecare principles of integrated care, all healthcare staff in all settings should be the focus of continence care education. At the first point of contact initial assessment, continence promotion and management is key. This would decrease the need for products, reduce inappropriate referrals and waiting times in secondary care and promote self-management of a chronic condition for patients.

National Primary Care Service Improvement Programme have developed an education programme to enable HCP to develop knowledge and acquire the skills to perform a holistic bladder and bowel assessment. The programme is suitable for healthcare professionals engaged in the assessment and management of adults with continence issues. Modules focus on:

- prevalence and impact of continence in Ireland,
- types and classification of incontinence,
- assessment and management,
- case studies,
- skin care,
- integrated care - shared care plan.

The modules were developed by a team with a wealth of teaching experience and clinical expertise. They include Continence Advisors, Nursing Practice Educator and Consultant Urologist Mr Eamonn Rogers. There are four modules in total and all modules can be completed in the participant's own time. The course is NMBI category 1 approved 7 CEUs.

Login and register at www.hseland.ie. Once registered, select course catalogues, then ONMSD catalogue. Scroll down for National Adult Continence Education Programme 2021 -2020. Once complete you are invited to a Live Q&A session every quarter with Continence Advisors and other panellists.

The National Guideline for promoting continence care in adults and supporting toolkit with assessment forms, pathways, patient information leaflets and associated resources is available via dedicated webpage hse.ie/continencecare

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