



## New Saolta Radiation Oncology Centre

University Hospital Galway and the Saolta Group were delighted to officially open the Saolta Radiation Oncology Centre this year.

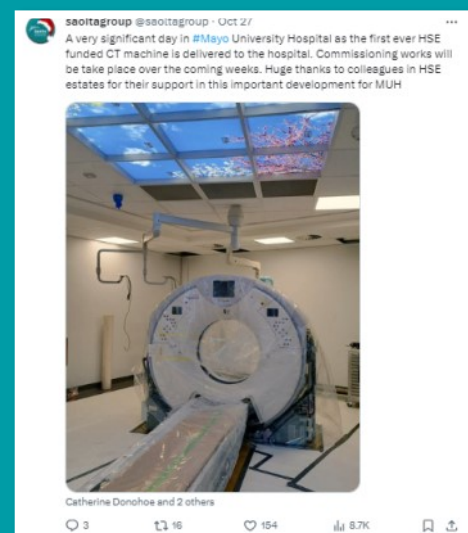
Welcoming the new development, Minister Donnelly said: "I am delighted to open this new radiation oncology centre, which is the result of a commitment to expand radiotherapy provision in Galway under our National Cancer Strategy.

"This centre will help to improve provision of radiotherapy for cancer patients, and to allow the introduction of new treatments and technologies. This multi-million Euro project shows this Government's commitment to a programme of infrastructure improvement at the Galway hospital campuses."

Click [here](#) to view the new state of the art Radiation Oncology Centre, the centre is equipped to the highest specification, providing advanced radiotherapy treatment for cancer patients all across the West and North West.



# Saolta Tweets



Follow us on Twitter for updates!



@saoltagroup

## Chief Executive Officer Saolta Group

Dear colleagues

When I look back on 2023, it is clear that it was a very demanding year on our hospitals and on staff working across the Saolta Group. Attendances at our EDs and MIU increased again over the course of the year, but even in that context we managed make significant progress in improving patient care where needed. Two of the areas that I look at closely are access for patients through our emergency departments and access for patients to elective care from our waiting lists and these are among the key areas where significant improvements were made in this 12 months. We have reduced the overall number of patients awaiting admission on a trolley in our hospitals by 11% this year and nearly 14% reduction in the number of patients awaiting OPD appointments.

Our access problems have not been resolved, and will require significant attention again in 2024, but I would like to acknowledge the really great work that has been done in both these areas and in many others across all of our hospitals.

I have previously mentioned the reforms taking place in the HSE with the establishment of the six new Region Health Areas. These reforms have been advancing over the past year and we are likely to see significant changes to the way our services are organised in 2024. While this may not affect everyone's daily working life, it will affect many. Making the new Health Regions work in ways that make sense for our patients is largely in our hands. The challenge for us all is to ensure that we don't just change the structure through which we deliver care but that we fundamentally change the way care is delivered.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year, and to thank you for all your hard work in 2023. I look forward to working with you again in 2024.

Please click [here](#) to view staff Christmas video message.

Tony Canavan  
Chief Executive Officer



Tony Canavan, CEO

## Chief Operations Officer Saolta Group

Dear colleagues

I want to personally thank all our staff for another year of professionalism and commitment to patient care. 2023 has seen some of the busiest periods of emergency activity. Our hospitals continue to experience high levels of urgent emergency care over the past number of months, which has proved to be very challenging to manage. We continue to prioritise key initiatives and interventions to optimise and support patient flow for the coming winter on all of our hospital sites. We will use all available bed capacity to support the demands on the service.

Despite the sustained demands you have continued to deliver the highest quality patient care and support to each other as colleagues.

I also want to commend you all on the ongoing work to reduce waiting lists. Despite the pressures each hospital has faced, the ongoing efforts to reduce waiting lists and waiting times are bearing fruit and I want to thank you all.

In 2023 Saolta experienced a 15% increase in OPD referral rates going from 146,400 in 2022 up to 168,700. Despite this additional referral demand, we removed 180,000 patients from outpatients waiting lists. We reduced our average wait time by 23% for an outpatient appointment down from 12.2 months to 9.3 months. We surpassed our OPD total waiting list target of 92,000 and decreased the numbers waiting to 90,861 (14%) across the group of hospitals. We achieved a 10% reduction in IPDC and 19% reduction in GI scope.

I also want to update you on some infrastructure developments across all our hospitals which will support and enhance our service delivery.

Many of the challenges we are experiencing require long term solutions and the major infrastructure developments delivered across the group this year will go a long way to ensuring our population's healthcare needs can be met into the future. In February, the new eight bed Palliative Care Support Unit opened under the governance and operational management of RUH.

Adding capacity to the system is a top priority and some key highlights this year include the opening of new 12 bed ward and the progression of new 50 bed ward block in PUH. In GUH we were delighted to open the new state of the art Saolta Radiation Oncology Centre earlier this year which will enhance cancer services for the region. SUH continues with the hospital enabling works for the ward block development and car park expansion which will add much needed capacity and MUH has progressed to the next stage of planning for the new ED/AMU build. And in LUH progress has been made in the Development Control Plan which sets out key infrastructure needs for the hospital. All of these projects require huge individual and collective effort, thank you to everyone involved.

Finally I wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas and I look forward to working with you in 2024.

Ann Cosgrove  
Chief Operations Officer



Ann Cosgrove, COO

# Update from the Saolta Project Management Office

We are delighted to welcome to our team Siobhan McEniff, who joined the Saolta PMO as Project Manager.



We would like to congratulate Pauline Burke who took up the position of Portfolio Lead. Pauline is seen here graduating with her Masters in Leadership in Healthcare from the HSE Leadership Academy.

We would also like to congratulate Irene Maguire who moved to the National Strategic Programmes Office as Programme Manager.

We wish Siobhan, Pauline and Irene the very best in their new roles and the exciting challenges ahead.

## Sláintecare Integrated Fund (SIF Round 2):

GUH have been successful in an application for Sláintecare funding to test a new "Acute Integrated Pre-Admission Virtual Navigation Hub". The primary aim of this initiative is to decrease Emergency Department attendances by 10%. This will be achieved by navigating patients, referred by GPs, to alternate:

- Emergency care within the hospital setting such as AMAU and ASAU
- Urgent care pathways within the hospital
- Urgent outpatient appointments from GUH OPD and in the specialist integrated care community hubs

We are hopeful that this service will go live in Q1 2024.

## Project Management Training

The Saolta PMO in conjunction with the PMOs in CHW and CH CDLMS developed a training course on Project Management for Community of Practice participants in response to a needs analysis. This Introduction to Project Management was held over three lunchtime sessions and feedback from participants was very positive.

Portfolio Management Offices in CH CDLMS and CH East are providing 'Fundamentals of Project Management' training for staff across their regions. This opportunity is being extended to Saolta and CHW staff who have an interest in project management.

Look out for further details in the new year.



## Modernised Care Pathways (MCPs):

The implementation of Modernised Care Pathways (MCPs) is central to transforming the delivery of scheduled care services and has been a significant component of the Department of Health's **Waiting List Action Plan 2023**. It is progressing on a phased basis with priority focus on specialties with the most significant waiting lists.

### Phase 1 MCPs for Saolta: Implementation 2023

| Speciality   | Pathway Name                                       |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Urology      | Haematuria (GUH)                                   |
| Urology      | LUTS (GUH)                                         |
| Urology      | Continence (GUH & LUH)                             |
| Orthopaedics | Virtual Trauma Assessment Clinics (SUH, MUH & GUH) |

Haematuria and Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms (LUTS) have been successfully piloted and embedded across Saolta and are being scaled up and implemented across the HSE. The hospitals and community services have been working together to co-design the implementation of the Continence pathway across Saolta, CHW and CHCDLMS. All Orthopaedics Virtual Clinics are operational.

### Phase 2 MCPs for Saolta:

There are a number of additional pathways which are planned to be progressed in 2024. Recruitment had commenced and work is ongoing to review and validate as part of the 2024 National Service Plan.

Members of Saolta attended the MCP workshop in Dublin on the 30th November where the Chronic Disease pathways, Home Dialysis, VFAC were showcased.

Further information from PMO as required.

## PMO Priorities

The Draft Saolta Strategy Addendum 2024 is under consideration by the Executive Committee and will be prioritised / progressed in the context of the emerging Health Regions.

Saolta PMO also continues to work on the Saolta Integrated Governance Project (SIGP) which is implementing the Medicine and Perioperative MCANs.

Work is ongoing on the Enhanced Community Care programme and the National Clinical Programmes in collaboration with our community partners.

# Saolta Managed Clinical and Academic Networks' Roll Out

## Introduction

As the Clinical Director of the Saolta University Health Care Group I am delighted to confirm that the group wide Managed Clinical and Academic Networks (MCANs) are now in place for Medicine and Perioperative. Together with the existing Cancer and Women and Children's MCANs they will be working with the Executive Team and Hospital Management Teams in leading the development of Clinical Services.

I would like to welcome the Team Members to their new roles and to thank all those who have been involved in the development and implementation on behalf of the Saolta University Health Care Group.

**Prof. Pat Nash**

## Background and Context

The Saolta Integrated Governance Project is one of the seven key priorities in the Saolta University Health Care Group Strategy 2019-2023.

In January 2020, the Saolta Group launched the Cancer and Women & Children's Managed Clinical Academic Networks (MCANs). These were initially established on a trial of concept basis to test out the evolving integrated governance model. The objective of the MCANs is to strengthen the governance and oversight of clinical services and improve integration between hospitals in order to deliver safer and more effective patient care across the region. This objective will be achieved by:

- Bringing decision making closer to the point of care
- Streamlining clinical pathways
- Clarifying responsibility and accountability
- Integrating planning and service planning
- Optimizing resources
- Using KPIs to improve quality, drive performance, and ensure efficiency

## Initial Benefits of MCAN Model:

An evaluation of the initial Integrated Governance Phase was carried out in 2022 and a number of benefits were of the MCAN Model were identified:

- Greater integration through hospitals working together
- Better support for clinical specialties
- A focus on support for Quality Improvement
- Enhanced engagement with the National Programmes and Teams
- Shared learning and a standardised approach to clinical care
- An improved focus on performance
- Better engagement with patients and staff

Work is continuing on clarifying the roles and responsibilities between Hospital sites and the MCANs in relation to Quality and Patient Services, HR, Finance and Education/Training.

The MCAN Management Teams similar to the Hospital Management Teams are now included in the Saolta Performance & Accountability Framework. This involves reporting to the Group Executive Team who report into the National Hospitals Office.

To ensure regular information regarding the implementation of the MCAN model is made available to all a communications plan has been developed with existing and emerging MCANs in conjunction with the Saolta Communications Department.

## Next Steps for MCAN Phase 2 roll out

The Saolta Executive Committee formally approved moving towards Phase 2 of the project on May 05 2023. Phase 2 involves the implementation of the Perioperative and Medicine MCANs as well as the exploration of a fifth MCAN with the proposed involvement of Laboratory, Radiology and HSCPs. The Perioperative and Medicine MCANs are now operational and initial engagements are commencing in relation to the proposed fifth MCAN.

## Managed Clinical and Academic Network Teams

Each MCAN is led by the Director of the Network who works closely with the Network General Manager and the Network Director of Nursing. The MCAN Teams are supported by an Associate Clinical Director on sites where clinical care is provided.

## Women and Children's MCAN Team

- Professor John Morrison, Clinical Director, Women & Children's MCAN
- Dr Hillary Stokes, Clinical Director for Paediatrics, Women & Children's MCAN
- Siobhan Canny, Group Director of Midwifery, Women & Children's MCAN
- Siobhan Horkan, Director of Nursing Paediatrics, Women & Children's MCAN
- Eileen Kelly, General Manager, Women & Children's MCAN

### Specialties include:

|                                                               |             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Maternity / Obstetrics                                        | Gynaecology |
| Paediatrics                                                   | Neonatology |
| Adult, Child and Adolescent Sexual Assault Treatment Services |             |

## Cancer MCAN Team

- Professor Michael Kerin, Clinical Director, Cancer MCAN
- Geraldine Cooley, General Manager, Cancer MCAN
- Olive Gallagher, Director of Nursing, Cancer MCAN

### Cancer Specialties include:

|                                       |                    |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Medical Oncology                      | Radiation Oncology |
| Haematology                           | RAPC               |
| Breast Surgery and Symptomatic Breast | Palliative         |
| Histopathology*                       |                    |

## Medicine MCAN Team

- Professor Tim O'Brien, Clinical Director, Medicine MCAN
- Grainne Cawley, General Manager, Medicine MCAN
- Lorna Quinn, Director of Nursing, Medicine MCAN

### Medicine Specialties include:

|                            |                     |               |
|----------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Acute Medicine             | Cardiology          | Dermatology   |
| Elderly Care / Stroke Care | Emergency Care      | Endocrinology |
| Gastroenterology           | Infectious Diseases | Nephrology    |
| Neurology                  | Rheumatology        | Respiratory   |

## Perioperative MCAN Team

- Professor Alan Hussey, Clinical Director, Perioperative MCAN
- Judith McLucas, General Manager, Perioperative MCA
- Dearbhala Cassidy, Director of Nursing, Perioperative MCAN

### Perioperative Specialties include:

|                        |                        |                              |
|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Anaesthetics           | Cardiothoracic surgery | Day Services                 |
| ENT                    | General Surgery        | GI Surgery (Upper and Lower) |
| ICU/HCU                | Maxillofacial          | Ophthalmology                |
| Orthodontics           | Orthopaedics           | Plastic Surgery              |
| Theatre/CSSD/Endoscopy | Urology                | Vascular                     |

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

As we come towards the end of 2023, it is timely to reflect on achievements and work undertaken across the Group over the last year and to plan for 2024 priorities for the Women's and Children's MCAN.

## Quality and Patient Safety

The Saolta Maternity and Gynaecology Conference, held in March was a huge success. Supported by NWIHP, with key note speakers from across the Saolta Group as well as National delegates, topics covered included Clinical Governance and Adverse Outcomes, Maternity Risk Stratification and OEST (Obstetric Event Support Team). In addition, the Saolta Neonatal conference was held in February, 2023 with over 100 delegates attending from the Saolta Group itself and some travelling from other hospitals outside Saolta. The speakers covered a wide variety of neonatal topics and generated a lot of excellent questions and discussion.

The aim for 2024 is to host a Quality and Patient Safety Symposium for Paediatric Services in spring and work is underway in the development of the programme.

A Neonatology Conference has been scheduled on 07 March and the theme is "Standardisation of Neonatal care in a Group Setting" covering safety and quality.

## Quality Improvement (QI)

Projects remains a key priority with many Quality Improvement (QI) plans in place and the outcomes of these projects will be showcased over the coming months. The following provides a summary of some of the QI projects that have been actioned by the MCAN and Hospital Sites:

### •Saolta Paediatric Out Patient Department Scheduling Project

The MCAN have met with all hospitals in the Saolta Group to gather information on the processes and structure of the OPD Process - from receipt of the letter to structure of clinics etc. which will be reviewed for the group and shared learning/support to follow.

### •Saolta Critically Ill and Injured Child Project

The Saolta Critically Ill and Injured Child Project (SCIICP) commenced in December 2021 and is now two years in progress. The aim of this project is to ensure that robust structures, systems, processes and resources are available in the Saolta University Health Care Group to effectively manage the critically ill and injured child. The objectives of the project are being achieved through a number of work streams.

### •Hybrid model of Post Registration Children's Nursing Education Programme

The new innovative Hybrid Model of Post Registration Children's Nursing Education Programme in partnership with SAOLTA/TCD and Children's Health Ireland saw the first 7 Children's Nurses graduate from this new Children's Nursing Programme which they commended in Sept 2022. They were presented with a unique nursing badge which acknowledges their achievement.

This programme was a collaboration between Children's Health Ireland, Trinity College Dublin, Saolta and support from CEO, CDONM, CDONM CHI and Director of ONMSD.

## Saolta Women's and Children's MCAN Annual Clinical Report (2022)

The Saolta Women's and Children's MCAN Annual Clinical Report (2022) has been published and it displays the vast amount of data collected from each of the sites to form the data trends across the Group.

This report includes all activities related to Maternity Services, Neonatology, Gynaecology, Paediatrics, SATU and CASATS in our 5 hospitals – GUH, LUH, MUH, PUH and SUH.

The report is designed into sections largely aligned along the subject areas as just referred to above. The activity for each hospital site has been shown separately, and in combination to represent the Group.

The report is now available on the Saolta Website and can be accessed [here](#).



Saolta Maternity and Gynaecology Conference, from left: Tony Canavan; Killian McGrane; Dr Cliona Murphy; Dr Peter McKenna; Professor John Morrison; Aideen Quigley; Elaine Dobell; and Nikhil Purandare.



Saolta Neonatology Conference from left: Dr Johannes B. Letshwiti, Consultant Neonatologist; Dr Ethel Ryan, Consultant Neonatologist Paediatrician; and Dr Donough J. O'Donovan, Consultant Neonatologist Paediatrician.

# Cancer Managed Clinical and Academic Network (MCAN)

On the 20 October Minister Stephen Donnelly officially opened the Radiation Oncology Centre a state-of-the-art new facility which will provide advanced radiotherapy treatment for cancer patients across the West and North West. This much anticipated development has been planned for many years and supported by the National Cancer Control Programme with Dr Risteard O'Laoide, National Director, NCCP also in attendance at the opening. It was a proud day for all involved in bringing this vision to fruition.

Patricia Gleeson, Adolescent and Young Adult Clinical Nurse specialist and her colleagues from St James and Crumlin along with representatives from the Irish Cancer Society and the NCCP ran a really informative interactive study day in the newly opened Radiation Oncology building on 23 October. Speakers included Prof Owen Smith National Clinical lead CAYA, NCCP, Dr Peter McCarthy Paediatric and AYA Haematologist CHI @ Crumlin and St James. Other speakers included Dr Natalie Hession Principal psychologist GUH, Dr Helen Grealley National programme lead for psycho-oncology and Dr Scheryll Alken Consultant Oncologist CHI and St James. The afternoon session provided opportunity to look at difficult conversations and how healthcare professionals might navigate these with a lively and informative workshop.

In the next few months we hope to collaborate with Childhood Cancer Ireland to develop facilities within our cancer services for AYAs undergoing treatment in the hospital.



## Cancer Seminar Series:

The Cancer Seminar sessions began in November with Dr Natalie Hession, Principal Psychologist in Cancer Services Galway University Hospitals making a presentation on 'Psycho-Oncology A Vision for the West.' Dr Hession gave a very inspiring delivery of how we might improve psycho-oncology care in the West. She highlighted the development of the new psycho-oncology service in GUH. Dr Hession outlined innovative initiatives to capture and deliver psycho-oncology in the wider Saolta region including a psycho-oncology digital hub, teaching and training staff in psychological skills and patient talks and therapy groups. Other topics covered were psycho-oncology survivorship, psycho-oncology research and adolescent and young adult (AYA).



The next Cancer Seminar will take place Monday 08 January, 2023, at 1pm with Ms Ger Walpole, ANP in Sligo University Hospital presenting: Empowering Care: ANP-led Oral Anti Cancer Medication Clinics leading the way in expansion of cancer care.

All hospital and university staff, trainees, students are welcome. Join by Zoom.

## Date/Time:

First working Monday of the month, 1-2pm

## Venue:

<https://zoom.us/j/95442103609?pwd=MEExFU1dscCsxLzZORHZxQDJrQTR0Zz09>

## Zoom:

**Meeting ID:** 954 4210 3609 **Passcode:** 931026

Professor Carmel Malone took up the post of Clinical Lead in the Symptomatic Breast Unit in August this year.

Professor Malone is a Consultant General and Breast Surgeon, Former Head of School of Medicine in the University of Galway, Former Chair of the Irish Medical Schools Council and Past President of the Society of Breast Surgeons (SBS).

Professor Malone and the Team will to continue to:

- Provide a strong governance structure within the unit
- Continue to provide high quality, best practice in terms of care as guided by the National Cancer Control Programme a Model 4 Centre of Excellence
- Target access to care delays for the patients referred to the Symptomatic Breast Unit
- Grow the Unit in line with current demands so that capacity can deal with the demand


**Cancer Centre Seminar Series**


**Empowering Care: ANP-Led Oral Anti Cancer Medication Clinics Leading The Way In Expansion Of Cancer Care**

**GER WALPOLE**  
 ADVANCED NURSE PRACTITIONER, SLIGO UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL


**January 8th**  
 1-2pm  
 Online  
[Zoom Link](#)  


At The Gathering around Cancer November 16 and 17 2023 in Croke Park, Dr Michael McCarthy, Consultant Medical Oncologist, GUH spoke about the high cost of Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapy re-imburement. Prof Aoife Lowery, Consultant Breast and Endocrine surgeon GUH also spoke at the same conference on "Updates in Breast Conserving Surgery in an Era of De-escalation".

# Cancer

## Managed Clinical and Academic Network (MCAN)

Dr Sonya Chew joined the medical Oncology team in November 2023. Dr Chew trained in Limerick and Dublin before moving to Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centre in New York to undertake an advanced oncology fellowship. We are delighted to welcome Dr Chew to Galway as a consultant Oncologist specialising in Breast cancer and melanoma.



Dr Sonya Chew

Our Urology Nursing team recently published their research on: 'Patient-Reported Enablement After Consultation With Advanced Nurse Practitioners: A Cross-Sectional Study' Robert McConkey, Louise Murphy, Therese Kelly, Rachael Dalton, Geraldine Rooney, Donna Coy, Michelle Healy, Melinda Meeker, Marie O'Loughlin, and Maura Dowling.

This paper is an outcome of the urology nursing research and journal club. The club was formed in 2021 as a urology nursing clinical academic partnership with the School of Nursing in the University of Galway.

The paper was presented at the Saolta Urology/Continence Nurses Network (SUNN) Conference on the 6<sup>th</sup> October in the Maldron Hotel in Galway, and was awarded second place. The urology team have further plans to present their research at the IAAANMP (Irish Association of Advanced Nurse and Midwife Practitioners) conference, the IAUN (Irish Association of Urology Nurses) conference, and at the EAUN (European Association of Urology Nursing) conference in April 2024 in Paris.

The first placed poster at the SUNN conference, also came from the urology unit which involved the development of an E-form on Evolve for Catheterisation.

Rachael Dalton ANP Prostate survivorship has since moved on from the Prostate unit in Galway. We wish her well in the future, she will be missed.

### Letterkenny University Hospital

An oncology research study performed in Letterkenny University Hospital was recently highly commended in the HSE Excellence awards. This research study, which ran for two years (2020-2022) investigated the feasibility, safety and efficacy of ANP-led care for patients receiving oral anti-cancer medications (OAM) in community settings.

The LUH team consisted of Dr Janice Richmond, Mary Grace Kelly CNM2 and Alison Johnson CNM2 alongside colleagues in the University of Galway-Prof Andrew Murphy, Dr Patrick Murphy, Dr Laura O'Connor, Prof Paddy Gillespie, Dr Anna Hobbins and Dr Alberto Ivaréz-Iglesias. Dr Janice Richmond and Prof Andrew Murphy were the principal investigators and CNM2 Mary Grace Kelly was a co-investigator. The study concluded that ANPs were appropriately placed to care for patients receiving oral anti-cancer medications and that assessments and care can safely be performed in community settings. Currently in LUH, all patients if stable at cycle 2 of their OAM cycle, are referred to the ANP-led OAM clinic and these clinics are held outside of the acute hospital two days per week.

Dr Janice Richmond and Mary Grace Kelly attended to present their short-listed work under the "Improving Patient Experience" Category. There were over 100 applicants to this category and the team were delighted to be highly commended for their work.



Dr Janice Richmond and Mary Grace Kelly.

### Sligo University Hospital

Congratulations to Geraldine Walpole ANP Haematology Sligo University Hospital who won the Gillian Lamrock award at the Haematology Association of Ireland (HAI) conference in October for best oral presentation on her work 'ANP led Oral Anticancer Medication clinics leading the way in expansion of cancer care.'



### Organisation of European Cancer Institutions (OECI) Accreditation Programme

Since March 2023 working groups have been set up across the region to collate responses to the 345 standards across 9 chapters of the OECI manual. Quality improvement plans have been put in place thanks to the hard work of all the individuals involved across all levels and disciplines. As the OECI encapsulates the cancer trajectory of each patient the whole community of disciplines are engaged in the self-assessment process of the accreditation programme. An essential component of the process will be review of data relative to each hospital site by their nominated lead before submission.

## Academic Office

Building on the strong foundation of medical education and training across the Saolta Group the Chief Academic Officer with the Academic Office has worked with the National Doctors Training and Planning department to secure its position as part of the Clinical Educator Pilot programme. This will allow for further development of the established group wide Hub and Spoke structure. As part of this pilot, Dr Bernadette Lynch has been appointed as Director of Medical Education and Training and additional support will be provided to the site Associate Academic Officers. Prof Catherine McHugh, SUH, Dr Cyril Rooney, MUH, Dr Paul O'Hara, PUH, Dr Caroline Richardson (LUH) will continue in their roles to provide accountable educational leadership on the clinical sites.

The first meeting of the Saolta Group Medical Education and Training Committee took place in Galway on 05 December. This expanded support will allow for more strategic development of education across all sites in Saolta.



Back from left: Dr Cyril Rooney; Prof Anthony O'Regan,  
Front from left: Dr Caroline Richardson; Dr Bernadette Lynch;  
and Prof Cathy McHugh.

### Galway University Hospital

The first "Winter Clinical Case Symposium" hosted by the Academic Office, took on the 26th October. It was a great success. Twenty Registrars submitted abstracts of interesting clinical cases and six were chosen to present on the night.

The five judges (Dr Edina Moylett, Dr Helen Ingoldsby, Dr Brian Moloney, Professor Donal Reddan and Dr Alan Hussey) had a difficult task in choosing the 3 prize winners."

Thank you to all who supported this event, and a special thanks to our Registrars and SpRs who submitted abstracts and presented on the evening.

We hope to continue this new initiative in 2024 by hosting a "Spring Clinical Case Symposium"



From left: Dr Arielle Pierre; Dr Lisa Duffy; Dr Sulafa Salama; Dr Rhea O'Regan,; Dr Jia Wei The; and Dr Conall MacGearailt.

### Letterkenny University Hospital

The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Multidisciplinary Research Symposium was held at Letterkenny University Hospital on the 17 November 2023. The event, organised by the LUH Postgraduate Medical Education Department, showcased some of the excellent research taking place within LUH and the broader community, with oral and poster presentations from staff representing a wide range of disciplines within our healthcare services as well as University of Galway medical students. In addition, our esteemed guest speakers included Professor Anthony O'Regan, Chief Academic Officer for SUHG, who provided an overview advances in postgraduate medical education training and the NCHD workforce in Ireland, Dr Huiqi Yvonne Lu who joined virtually from Oxford with an insightful talk on clinical machine learning and artificial intelligence in healthcare, Dr Kathy Gallagher with a case discussion around important paediatric rheumatological emergencies, Professor Richard Costello who discussed his wealth of experience with digital learning in medicine as well as Emma Deenihan providing an overview of the role of the Clinical Research and Development Office in supporting research within the Saolta hospital sites.

The event provided an excellent opportunity for healthcare professionals, researchers and members of the academic community to come together for a day of innovation, knowledge sharing and celebration of our commitment to ensuring that evidence-based practice remains at the heart of our healthcare services.



From left: Prof A. O'Regan; Dr C. Richardson, Associate Director of Postgraduate Medical Education and Training, LUH; Dr G. Aleon, Cardiology Consultant; Dr AM Moran, Renal Consultant; and Dr I Yousif, Renal Consultant.

## Academic Office



The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Multidisciplinary Research Symposium at Letterkenny University Hospital

### Sligo University Hospital

This year's 24th Annual Multidisciplinary Health Research Conference and second Early Stage Health Researcher Forum organised and hosted by the Research and Education Foundation were held in Sligo University Hospital under the banner of "Health Science Expanding the Boundries" and aimed at disseminating and encouraging clinically relevant health research. They certainly met the brief.

120 people attended the 24th Multidisciplinary Health Research Conference which began with a rousing talk by Tommie Gorman calling for a reappraisal of the healthcare system to make sure it is fit for purpose going forward. This was followed by high calibre speakers including Prof. Aiden McCormick (Hepatologist St. Vincent), Jack O'Meara (CEO Ochre Bio), Dr. Kate Jack PhD RGN (Nottingham UH), Prof. Cathy McHugh (Endocrinologist SUH), Dr. Claire McEvoy PhD RD (Queen University), Prof. Alex Miras (Endocrinologist, Ulster University), Katriona Kilkelly (Obesity Dietetics, GUH) and Daniel Davey (Performance Nutritionist) addressing the topics of liver health, diabetes and weight management. Patient representatives from Type-1-diabetes Support Group thrivebetes.ie and Irish Coalition of People Living with Obesity also gave talks sharing their experiences of living with health challenges adding insight and human context to the discussion. During the breaks there was a chance for health researchers and health care professionals to mingle and browse the exhibition of 50 posters showing local research.

Some of this local research was presented to 70 attendees at the 2nd Early Stage Health Researcher Forum. From greater than 50 submissions 12 people were invited to present their research in slots of five minutes and receive feedback from a panel of experienced health researchers. A wide array of research was presented, demonstrating the quality and breadth of local multidisciplinary health research. Attendees commented on both quality of the presentations and usefulness of the critical feedback.

Medals were awarded for best presentation at the 2nd Early Stage Health Researcher Forum, won by 2nd Year BST GIM SUH trainee Dr Jimmy William and best poster in three categories: Medical Health Care; Nursing, Midwifery and Health and Social Care and Health Academic Research. These were won by 4th Year UG Medical Student Paddy Murphy, Cancer Research Nurse Margaret Burke and Lecturer in Occupational Safety and Health at ATU Sligo Margaret McCallig BSc, MSc, PhD Candidate, respectively.

In 2024, the 25th Annual Multidisciplinary Health Research Conference preceded by the third Early Stage Health Researcher Forum will take place in SUH on the 28th and 29th of November!



## RTE Hospital Live

Prof Derek O'Keeffe, Consultant Physician, Clinical Lead for Endocrinology, UHG and Caitriona Lynch, Clinical Nurse Specialist, UHG speaking about Artificial Intelligence (AI) helping to improve patient experience and reduce waiting times.

[Click here to view Hospital Live clip](#)



Dr Olga Mikulich, Respiratory Consultant, LUH speaking about the introduction of a new biological infusion therapy through injectables for Asthma patients.

[Click here to view Hospital Live clip](#)



Prof Michael Kerin, Clinical Director, Saolta Cancer MCAN speaking about Diagnosis of Breast Cancer using new screening technology - Wavelia in University Hospital Galway.

[Click here to view Hospital Live clip](#)



Prof Faisal Sharif, Interventional Cardiologist, UHG speaking about Cardiovascular disease early detection system to reduce hospitalisation.

[Click here to view Hospital Live clip](#)



## International Day of the Midwife Portiuncula University Hospital

Click [here](#) to view video



## Mums Wellbeing Hub University Hospital Galway

Click [here](#) to view video



## Tree planting ceremony in honour of Irish nurses at MUH

Mayo University Hospital was honoured to host Dame Elizabeth Anionwu in August as she carried out a tree planting ceremony to recognise the contribution of Irish nurses over the last 75 years in the UK National Health Service. The ceremony was an opportunity to celebrate the legacy and heritage of the nursing community locally and internationally with a special focus on Irish nurses and their contribution to the NHS.

Dame Anionwu is an Emeritus Professor of Nursing at the University of West London. She was inspired to become a nurse at the age of four because whilst growing up in care she was treated by a wonderful nursing nun. Born in 1947 Elizabeth has Irish / Nigerian heritage, throughout her career she was honoured with an Order of Merit in 2022 and a Damehood in 2017 for her work on improving the health and wellbeing of multi-ethnic communities.

The tree planting service was attended by Olayinka Aremu, President of the Association of Nigerian Nurses in Ireland, Conrad Bryan Director of the Mixed Race Irish Association, Kevin Bourke and Marianne Staunton from the Mayo Emigrant Liaison Committee and members of MUH nursing staff.

Click [here](#) for more.



From left: Shanti Ezenwa, Association of Nigerian Nurses in Ireland; Dame Elizabeth Anionwu; Padraig O Luanaigh, Director of Nursing MUH; and Olayinka Aremu President of Association of Nigerian Nurses in Ireland.

## Sepsis Awareness



Donegal family is urging the public to know the signs of sepsis.

Moninne Bradley, from Killygordon in Co Donegal, was left fighting for her life last year as the result of the rapid spread of sepsis.

Had it not been for the quick actions of her sister, Nurse Orla Noonan, she would not have survived.

In the weeks leading up to her collapse, Moninne had been fighting an infection and had taken a course of antibiotics and steroids to combat it. When she later developed spots on her throat, she believed it was a side effect of the antibiotics. She returned to her GP and was started a course of tablets to treat thrush.

On the day before her hospitalisation, Moninne went to work as usual. Still concerned about a swelling that appeared on her neck, she intended to return to her GP as a precaution the following day. Click [here](#) for more.

## Galway City Cardiology Hub



Dr Susan Connolly with her team and patient Noel Ridge at the Galway City Hub.

The Enhanced Community Care pathway for Cardiology has been up and running since March 2023 in the West of Ireland under the joint governance of the Saolta University Health Care Group and Community Healthcare West.

Work carried out by the Galway City Hub has resulted in 300 patients being removed from the Galway University Hospitals wait list through a range of initiatives including list validation, a chest pain initiative, setting up of appointments at the hub instead of the hospital and the redirection of GUH hospital heart failure wait list to the hub.

"The ECC programme has been absolutely transformational for the care of patients with chronic cardiovascular disease. We have seen 298 new patients in the hub and had 1,300 clinical contacts since we started," said Dr Susan Connolly, Cardiologist with UHG who also leads the cardiology service in the Galway City Integrated Care Hub. Click [here](#) for more.

# 'Thinking of You' Memory Boxes for Organ Donors'



During Organ Donation Awareness Week (20-27 May) Saolta officially launched the award-winning Hospice Friendly Hospitals project 'Thinking of You Memory Boxes for Organ Donors.'

The 'Thinking of You Memory Boxes' is a new initiative within the Saolta Group dedicated to Organ Donors and their families. Memory boxes can be a significant part of the journey of donor families who have lost a loved one. The initiative aims to support patients in their final days of life and their families into bereavement and beyond.

The tree of life is the symbol stamped on the box representing the continuation of life that a deceased individual has given to another. Each Memory Box contains; a lavender bouquet, a small candle, a 'thinking of you' memory cloud which is placed in the donor's hand during their final hours, a hanging emblem in memory of the donor with the inscription 'when it rains, look for the rainbows', and inkless handprints created at the bedside to provide comfort during a sensitive time. Click [here](#) for more.

## Rainbow Project at RUH



The RUH Rainbow Project is a Quality Improvement Project that aims to promote an open, non-judgemental and inclusive healthcare setting for those who identify as LGBTI+ (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex +).

The RUH Rainbow Project evolved from an identified clinical and service need within RUH in November 2022. This prompted a collaborative approach from the Endoscopy Triage Nurse and Patient Advice Liaison Service Coordinator to gather information pertaining to national and global policies, documents, guidelines, supports and education available for healthcare staff in relation to various issues faced when accessing healthcare by members of the LGBTI+ community. The conclusion of this research identified there are no set healthcare practice or education guidelines on this topic.

As a result, the need for the provision of education and awareness training for all services and departments within RUH was highlighted.

Michelle McDermott, Endoscopy Triage CNM2 and Rainbow Project lead said, "We identified the HSE Rainbow Badge project as an initiative we could introduce to the hospital community as a starting point to address these identified needs.

"An education program for staff was developed. The education session includes information on pronouns, terminology, gender expression and orientation, inclusion at clinical and service level and the meaning of the Rainbow badge. The HSE rainbow badge will be presented to staff who attend an RUH Rainbow education session, complete the HSEland LGBT+ Awareness and Inclusion Training: the Basics" training and sign a declaration form."

Christine Rohan, patient Advice and Liaison Service Coordinator and Rainbow Project lead added, "Wearing the badge is a responsibility, it is not just a tick box exercise, when staff are wearing the Rainbow badge, it means that they are there to listen, help and signposted to other services where appropriate. We have held seven education sessions and have had over 30 people in attendance to date. These RUH Rainbow Education Sessions remain ongoing.

"As part of the continuous learning we have completed the LGBT Ireland Champions program also attended the LGBT Ireland National Healthcare conference and network events."

"The RUH Rainbow project is still in its infancy but thanks to the support from our Director of Nursing and the staff in RUH, it has grown from strength to strength. We cannot do this without the support of staff in the hospital and we would like to thank them for their support so far and hope we can all work together to keep improving and developing this programme into the future."

# NAS Pathfinder goes live in Letterkenny and Galway

Pathfinder, a National Ambulance led service designed to safely keep older people who 112/999 in their own home rather than taking them to a hospital emergency department has gone live in Letterkenny and Galway.

Pathfinder improves outcomes for older people by providing safe alternative care at home rather than in hospital and will be provided by National Ambulance Service staff working with colleagues from Letterkenny University Hospital.

Robert Morton, Director of the HSE National Ambulance Service said the expansion of the NAS Pathfinder Model is part of a plan to offer different groups of patients an alternative pathway other than presenting to a busy emergency department.

"The National Ambulance Service is very pleased with the outcomes for individual patients being achieved by this service and we are delighted to be working with Letterkenny University Hospital and University Hospital Galway to support the expansion of the Pathfinder model to these parts of the country. The NAS Pathfinder model is improving outcomes for older people by offering safe alternative care pathways for many older people in their own homes who might otherwise have to be conveyed to a busy Emergency Department. Pathfinder is enabling NAS to play an increasing role as an integrator of health service delivery by also connecting 999 patients with the increasing range of community services being developed by the HSE to support the needs of older people."

JJ McGowan, GM Operations West with NAS said, "Many patients who present to the emergency department have non-urgent care needs that could be treated elsewhere. Overall, Pathfinder has shown that it is a safe and acceptable service for older people who dial 999/112 with low acuity complaints."

The Pathfinder 'Rapid Response Team' respond to 999/112 calls for older people (65 years and older) in their homes. The older person is assessed by both an Advanced Paramedic and Occupational Therapist/Physiotherapist. Where safe, the team supports the older person at home rather than transporting them to emergency department, by linking with a wide range of alternative hospital and community services. Pathfinder also operates a 'Follow-Up Team' (Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy) which provides immediate home-based rehabilitation, equipment provision and case-management in the subsequent days following a 999/112 call. On average two thirds of patients seen by Pathfinder following a 999 call have remained at home rather than being brought to the Emergency Department.

On a recent visit to University Hospital Galway, Health Minister Stephen Donnelly said, "I'm delighted to see the rollout of Pathfinder in Galway. I met the team and can see the great work they will be doing for patients across Galway. We've seen the results of pathfinder where of the calls responded to, as many as two-thirds of patients were able to avoid being taken to the Emergency Department and could be successfully treated at home with appropriate follow-up care."



From left: Tommy Kerr, Physiotherapy Manager; Eimear McGlynn, Senior OT; Aoife O'Donnell, Senior Physiotherapist; Gary Gardiner, Advanced Paramedic; Rosaleen Greene, Clinical Specialist OT; Shane Connelly, Advanced Paramedic; Martin Conlon, Advanced Paramedic; Brian Ferry, Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer, North West and Sean Murphy, Hospital Manager, LUH.

From left: Gary Gardiner, Advanced Paramedic; Eimear McGlynn, Senior OT; Aoife O'Donnell, Senior Physiotherapist; Shane Connelly, Advanced Paramedic; Rosaleen Greene, Clinical Specialist OT and Martin Conlon Advanced Paramedic.



From left: Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly TD; John O'Donnell, Consultant in Emergency Medicine UHG; Miriam McCollum, Senior OT; Conor Keady, Clinical Specialist OT; Pat Dooher, Advanced Paramedic and Brian Murphy, Advanced Paramedic.

From left: Conor Keady, Clinical Specialist OT; Maire Doyle, Clinical Specialist Physiotherapist; Miriam McCollum, Senior OT; Keril Dempsey, Advanced Paramedic; Pat Dooher, Advanced Paramedic and Brian Murphy, Advanced Paramedic.

## PUH Cardiology Department Donation

The Cardiology Department at Portiuncula University Hospital recently received a donation of €1,540 from Joanna Mitchell, Loughrea in County Galway.

Joanna ran the Great Limerick Run half marathon and raised funds for the Cardiology Department through a Go Fund Me fundraiser.

Speaking about the donation Joanna said, "My purpose for running the half marathon was to challenge myself because I had only been running for a year and I knew it would be a big challenge and I needed incentive to keep me on track. My family and I have been blessed to have a fantastic hospital like Portiuncula to receive critical care when needed. I really wanted to give back to the hospital, and I'm thrilled that the money donated will be used to fund important medical devices."

Professor Aidan Flynn, Consultant Cardiologist at the hospital stated, "We are very grateful to Joanna for this very generous donation which will enable the purchase of a number of specialised devices that will assist patients in determining if they have an irregular cardiac rhythm."

The devices will allow us to collect specific information that will be essential in diagnosing a specific heart problem or ruling out a specific illness. It will be extremely beneficial to both patients and their cardiology team."



From left: Grace Gannon, Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Cardiology; Professor Aidan Flynn, Consultant Cardiologist; Joanna Mitchell; Evelyn Mullins, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Cardiology and Maura O'Connell, Assistant Director of Nursing, PUH

## RUH Inaugural Nursing Grand Rounds

Roscommon University Hospital ran its inaugural Nursing Grand Rounds in June. Representatives from across the Saolta group attended the event in person and online.

Director of Nursing, Ursula Morgan gave the opening address and highlighted that the grand rounds was an excellent platform to share, learn and to be inspired by colleagues in a supportive environment.

Trish Larkin, RANP in Emergency Medicine, presented a case involving a fracture patient who presented to Roscommon Injury Unit. She emphasised the significance of not only dealing with the fracture, but also of taking a holistic approach to treatment, and she addressed osteoporosis and menopause in her presentation also.

Caroline Smyth, CNS in Palliative Care spoke passionately about her background, service, and future plans. She demonstrated how vital her role is within the MDT, and reinforced the message that Palliative care is so much more than care of the dying person but rather, promoting quality of life and living well. RUH was honoured to have Chief Director of Nursing and Midwifery, Paul Hooton attend and give a rousing closing address.

Feedback from the event was overwhelmingly positive. The event will be held monthly and all members of the Saolta group are welcome to attend in person, or via zoom.



From left: Kate O'Connell, ADON Practice Development; Paul Hooton Chief Director of Nursing & Midwifery, Saolta; Kate Donlon, RANP, Frailty; Patricia Larkin, RANP, Injury Unit; Ursula Morgan, DON and Caroline Smyth, CNS Palliative Care.



## UHG first Centre to introduce Nerve Blocking Probe

UHG has become the first centre in Ireland to introduce a nerve blocking probe which uses liquid nitrogen to freeze nerves and remove pain post surgery.

The CryoNerve blocking probe delivers liquid nitrogen at a temperature of around -190 degrees from the tip of the device during invasive surgery.

This device is applied to the nerve underneath each rib, freezing it and temporarily stopping its conduction. These nerves are one of the main sources of pain after chest surgery, and cryo nerve block helps by temporarily shutting off the nerve. Once frozen, it thaws over a period of months, reducing pain for patients recovering from major surgery.

Dr Alan Soo, Consultant Cardiothoracic Surgeon at University Hospital Galway, who has introduced the technology to Ireland for thoracic surgery says the device also has the potential to be rolled out to cardiac surgery. Click [here](#) for more.



Dr Alan Soo, Consultant Cardiothoracic Surgeon, UHG with patient Imelda Ryan, Sligo.

## New videofluoroscopy equipment at MUH



From left: Karen Waardenburg, Senior Speech and Language Therapist; Ciara Burns, Radiographer; Michael Browne, patient and Patricia McHugh, Senior Speech and Language Therapist.

A new high specification videofluoroscopy service has been introduced in Mayo University Hospital. Michael Browne from Ballina, Co Mayo was the first patient to be treated with the new state of the art diagnostic technology at the hospital.

The investment in this new equipment and software will improve patient outcomes at the hospital by providing high quality diagnostic imagery to guide the management and treatment of patients with swallowing difficulties.

The videofluoroscopy service is led by the Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) Department and is delivered in close collaboration with the Radiology Service at MUH.

Videofluoroscopy is a specialised x-ray that shows what happens when you eat and drink. It is a detailed examination of the swallow and is considered the 'gold standard' for the assessment of swallowing difficulties, which is known as dysphagia.

## PUH Frailty Team Fundraise for Voluntary Organisations

During Older Persons Awareness Week in March the Frailty Front Door Team (FFD) at Portiuncula University Hospital fundraised for voluntary organisations, Alone and Age Action.

Maria Lennon, Senior Occupational Therapist said, "These organisations provide such amazing support to older persons living in the community."

"Throughout Older Persons Awareness Week we raised awareness and provided a platform for sharing information on the services available in the community to assist and support older people living well at home."

We successfully raised a total of €800 and are looking forward to continuing to work with these organisations in supporting discharges home from the hospital."



From left FFD: Lisa O'Looney, Senior Physio; Karen Hurley, Assistant Staff Officer; Stella Hannon, Therapy Assistant; Maria Lennon, Senior OT; Mona Tillmanns, Alone Support Coordinator, CHO2; Livio Rocca, Age Action Maintenance Staff Member and Kelley Treacy, Clinical Nurse Specialist.

## Severe Asthma Clinic in LUH transforming lives of patients

The Severe Asthma Clinic in Letterkenny University Hospital which is changing the lives of people with the condition, has featured on a RTE television show into hospital innovations.

The LUH run clinic offers novel therapeutics and treatment for people in the region suffering from severe asthma. The treatment involves an injectable biological infusion which dramatically reduces the symptoms of the condition in some patients.

Dr Olga Mikulich, Respiratory Consultant at LUH introduced new biological infusion therapies for patients in the North West in 2018 and has witnessed first-hand the dramatic improvements in patients' lives since.

"Not everybody will be suitable for this injection but if you find the right patient and start them on this treatment the effect is so transformational. They still need to take their preventative medication including their inhalers but they have their lives back," added Dr Mikulich. Click [here](#) for more.

Click [here](#) to view Hospital Live Clip.



Patient Bernadette McCafferty from Castlefin, County Donegal with Respiratory Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Patricia McLaughlin at the Asthma Clinic, Letterkenny University Hospital.

## Galway Breastfeeding Clinic wins at Irish Healthcare Centre Awards



From left, Helen Martin, Director of Public Health Nursing, Community Healthcare West; Maureen O'Connell, Public Health Nurse, Community Healthcare West; Dr Ethel Ryan, Neonatologist and Paediatrician, University Hospital Galway; Dr Sinead Gavin, GP and Clinical Lead for the 'Well Baby Breastfeeding Clinic'; Ailish Killilea, Assistant Director of Public Health Nursing, Community Healthcare West; Maggie Coyne, Public Health Nurse, Community Healthcare West; Mary Boyle, Administration, Shantalla Clinic and Frances Burke, Lactation Consultant, Community Healthcare West.

A unique breastfeeding clinic designed to support mothers who are having difficulty breastfeeding has won two Irish Healthcare Centre Awards. The 'Well Baby Breastfeeding Clinic' in Galway won Best Community Outpatient Initiative of the year and Clinical Team of the year at an awards ceremony in May.

The 'Well Baby Breastfeeding Clinic', the first of its kind in Ireland, is a collaboration between the Maternity Department at University Hospital Galway (UHG) and the Department of Public Health Nursing, Community Healthcare West and was designed to support mothers who are having difficulty breastfeeding in the early weeks of their breastfeeding journey. Click [here](#) for more.

## SUH roll out the Irish National Orthopaedic Register



From left: Micheál Bailey, Irish National Orthopaedic Register; Farnan Golden, IT; Aine Duffy, Arthroplasty Nurse Specialist; Caroline Quinn, CNM3 Perioperative Directorate; Ruth McManus, CNM 2, PAC; Michelle Gilroy, CNM2, TQIP; and Mr John Kelly, Orthopaedic Consultant Clinical Lead.

The National Office of Clinical Audit (NOCA) is pleased to announce that Sligo University Hospital (SUH), which is part of the Saolta Hospital Group, has become the 18th hospital in Ireland to roll out the Irish National Orthopaedic Register (INOR). The aim of this initiative is to monitor and improve the quality of care for individuals receiving joint replacement surgery in Ireland.

INOR is a secure, web-based, real-time system which provides a national electronic register of patients receiving joint replacement surgery in Ireland. Elective orthopaedic hip and knee replacement records will now be available nationally in a central register for the first time. The register will collate information from Sligo and will support early detection of implant performance and improve the efficiency of the recall and review process. Click [here](#) for more.

## Two new dedicated patient-centred roles introduced at Mayo University Hospital

Mayo University Hospital have introduced two new roles within the hospital which are aimed at improving patient engagement and providing support to patients and their families. The new appointments are part of a strategic focus on emphasising the value of the voice of patients in their own care as well as in the planning and delivery of care across the hospital.

Ciara McLaughlin has been appointed as Patient Engagement and Partnership Coordinator and Lorraine Cooney has taken up the role of the Patient Advice and Liaison Service Coordinator. Engagement is essential to the delivery of patient-centred care and MUH has an active patient and family engagement forum since 2016. Our advisors work with staff on operational committees, quality improvement initiatives and the development of new services for the benefit of patients.

Ciara McLaughlin, newly appointed Patient Engagement and Partnership Improvement Coordinator in MUH is responsible for facilitating patient engagement through training and supporting staff, assisting the hospital volunteers and coordinating the patient and family engagement forum. Ciara is a Ballina native and has recently returned to Mayo following 14 years working in the NHS.

Speaking about her role Ciara said, "I am delighted to take up this post with MUH and to be part of a dynamic and committed team of staff, volunteers and patient advisors who are all working towards a common goal of making our hospital a better place."

Lorraine Cooney was appointed as PALS Coordinator in MUH, she joined MUH from Galway University Hospitals where she worked as a Clinical Specialist Radiation Therapist for past eight years. Speaking about her role Lorraine said, "I know that being in hospital can be a vulnerable time for patients and their families."

I hope the role of PALS provides a contact point to offer support and advice. I am passionate about making each patient encounter as positive as possible, by championing effective communication and ensuring the patient's voice is heard, either directly or through a nominated individual. I am also committed to ensuring patient feedback is channelled towards learning, as we strive to continually improve the patient experience in MUH."

Click [here](#) for more.



## Father donates gift of life to daughter

Paddy Browne, a native of County Galway and eHealth Director of Nursing at Saolta University Health Care Group, who donated part of his liver to daughter Sadhbh is encouraging everyone and particularly organ recipients to live their best life.

Sadhbh Browne was four years old when she received a partial liver transplant from her father Paddy in 2019. Speaking about his daughter, Paddy said, "Sadhbh was born with a rare liver condition, and subsequently developed serious liver complications that required a liver transplant. Following the transplant, Sadhbh had a long but steady road to recovery and now, thankfully, she is living her best life and will demonstrated it when she represented Transplant Sport Ireland at the British Transplant Games in Coventry in July. I am so proud of Sadhbh and how far she has come."

Sadhbh and Paddy represented Ireland for the first time and joined fellow athletes from Transplant Sport Ireland at the games.

The four day sports competition saw heart, lung, liver, kidney, pancreas, bone marrow transplant recipients, kidney dialysis patients and live donors from all over the UK, Ireland and Australia compete.



## SUH Garden Club partners with Sligo Leader and the Organic Centre



Sligo University Hospital has partnered with Sligo Leader and the Organic Centre to introduce a year-long Garden Project involving some minor gardening work throughout the hospital. This project is part of the hospital's Green Campus Programme and will focus on increasing biodiversity on the site as well as enhancing outdoor spaces at the hospital.

The recently published [HSE Climate Action and Sustainability Strategy](#) outlines the HSE's plan to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss and this project is one of a number of initiatives undertaken by Sligo University Hospital's Green Campus Committee. We all have a role to play in responding to climate change and biodiversity loss and this project in SUH is already delivering benefits to the participants, staff, patients and visitors who are enjoying the beautiful green areas in the hospital.

The project consists of approximately 15 community volunteers, running from Spring to Autumn and lead by Tutors from the Organic Centre based in Rossinver, County Leitrim. The volunteers undertake various gardening activities such as planting, weeding, pruning, and preparing planter boxes for winter. The project is funded by the HSE's Climate Action and Sustainability Office and Sligo Leader Partnership Company.

## RUH Mark Bowel Cancer Awareness

Spreading awareness in RUH for patients and staff during Bowel Cancer Awareness Month in April.



From left: Colorectal CNS, Olive Cummins; Mr Tapas Chatterjee, SpR and Bowel Screen CNM2, Lorraine Harney



From left: Consultant Surgeon, Mr Mohamed Eldin; Colorectal CNS, Olive Cummins; Consultant Surgeon, Ms Emmeline Nugent; Bowel Screen CNM2, Lorraine Harney and Bowel Screen CNM2, Laura Fleming

Georgina Kilcoyne, Deputy Hospital Manager SUH, said, "We are delighted to be collaborating with Sligo Leader and the Organic Centre on this year-long project. Our main focus is always on patient care and getting our patients back to their full health potential.

International studies have shown that hospital patients with a view of greenery recover more rapidly, and require less pain medication and therefore it's a priority that we respect and care for our environs. The garden is an inclusive space that will provide that all-important connection to plants and gardens and support the mental, physical and social health of our community."

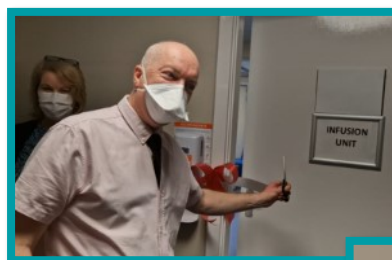
Click [here](#) for more

## New PUH Infusion Clinic

The Infusion Unit at PUH was officially opened recently by Professor Gerard Clarke.

The Unit is a three chaired and one trolley unit and is located on the first floor, adjacent to St Clare's ward. It is a Nurse led service that administers infusion of medicines and other non-surgical day care/treatments to patients under the care of the consultants in PUH.

The unit is open for treatments on Monday's from 10:30 -16:30 and 08:30-16:30 Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Booking is via [dacare.portiuncula@hse.ie](mailto:dacare.portiuncula@hse.ie)



From left: Prof Gerard Clarke with Sheila McCrorie, ADON.



From left: Staff nurses, Annette Doyle and Michelle Burke; CNM 2, Lucy Kelly, patient Carmel Bellew; Professor Gerard Clarke, Gastroenterologist and Dr Chaudhary Raman, Registrar.

## LUH win national health and safety award

The Health and Safety team in Letterkenny University Hospital are delighted to have won a national Health and Safety Excellence Award for their work on internal audit.

The awards, which took place in March recognise and reward the most outstanding health and safety achievements in Ireland under twenty categories. LUH were winners in the healthcare category and the team celebrated their success with an event in the hospital last week.

Internal audits play a crucial role in healthcare quality improvement and huge work has been carried out by the health and safety team since their internal audit programme commenced in 2021. The overall purpose of the programme is to provide senior management in LUH with an overview of how the hospital's occupational health and safety system is performing. It also assists the hospital in complying with the HSE Corporate Safety Statement and relevant legislation.

Click [here](#) for more.



LUH staff and management with National Health and Safety Excellence Award.

## PUH Celebrates 80 Years of Service

Portiuncula University Hospital recently celebrated 80 years of delivering healthcare to Ballinasloe and the surrounding areas with a special mass to commemorate the founding of PUH and to acknowledge the contributions of the Sisters of the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood (FMDM) and all staff, past and present, who served the community so effectively.

The celebratory mass was led by Fr Bernie Costello, Hospital Chaplain and Archdeacon John Godfrey. Hospital Manager James Keane, together with former staff members, Sr Chad McCollum and Margaret Burke, spoke of the hospital's history.

Members of the FMDM gathered with former and present colleagues, and the day was marked by a special reunion with many anecdotes shared by all.



## Saolta Arts Menu of Poems

To celebrate Poetry Day Ireland a Menu of Poems was distributed throughout Irish hospital wards, waiting rooms and other healthcare settings for patients, visitors and staff to enjoy. The poetry was selected by Poet Theo Dorgan.

Menu of Poems takes the form of a short anthology of poetry distributed annually to healthcare users in a range of healthcare settings. Produced by Saolta Arts on behalf of Arts and Health Co-ordinators Ireland, supported by Poetry Ireland and HSE Health Promotion and Improvement, over 10,000 people in healthcare settings received the Menu of poems.

Margaret Flannery, Saolta Arts Director said, "Menu of Poems continues to grow its audience annually and I am delighted to work with my colleagues in Arts and Health Co-ordinators Ireland, the HSE and Poetry Ireland to realise this special project. With the recordings and download available online the poetry can be accessed all year round in all healthcare settings for everyone to enjoy across the country."

Visit <https://saoltaarts.com/> for more information.



Margaret Flannery, Saolta Arts Director with patient Gerry Riordan.

## LUH Staff Raise €7,000 for Local Charities

Staff at Letterkenny University Hospital hosted a variety show at An Grianán Theatre over two nights in May. The concert brought together the best of LUH's actors, musicians, performers, singers and dancers for a night of entertainment and laughs. The famous LUH choir led by renowned choral director Veronica Mc Carron opened and closed the concert.

Throughout the two events nearly €7,000 was raised and cheques were recently presented to representatives of the various charities; Donegal Down Syndrome was presented with €2,922, Féilecáin, The Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Association of Ireland received €2,922 and the Friends of Letterkenny University Hospital were presented with €1,060.

Speaking about the concert Winne Felle, member of the LUH Hospital Show Committee said, "We are very lucky to have a wonderful team in LUH who have many talents outside of the hospital, I'd like to thank everyone involved for a fabulous production which showcased the very best of our hospital community."



Members of LUH choir and Hospital Show Committee with representatives from Friends of LUH, Féilecáin and Donegal Down Syndrome.

## End of Life Awareness Campaign at PUH



In June Portlincula University Hospital hosted an awareness Campaign on End of Life Care to promote and celebrate the work and progress on End of Life Care in the hospital.

The Hospice Friendly promotes high quality care for all people at the end of life regardless of diagnosis and whether the death is expected or sudden, and it acknowledges the role of clinical, administrative and support staff in improving the patient's and family's experience.

PUH became affiliated with the Hospice Friendly Hospitals Programme in 2015 to ensure that end of life care is central to the mission and everyday business of hospital. PUH has been a leader in implementing the values of End of Life Care since its inception and the hospital continues to be guided by the quality standards for End of Life Care in Hospitals.

From left: Carmel Johnston, CNM 2, Palliative Care; Kathy Higgins, Pastoral Care; Sharon Donoghue, PALS; Mary Barrett A/DON and Helen Ely, ANPc, Palliative Care.

## UHG Trials New Technology for Patients with Heart failure



University Hospital Galway has completed the final phase of an innovative clinical trial which reduces the hospitalisation rate for patients living with heart failure.

The trial which allows patients to be treated for heart failure from home has the potential to be a game changes in the treatment and monitoring of the condition.

The Cordella Pulmonary Artery Pressure Sensor detects changes in the health of patients with heart failure and securely transmits the information to the care team for review. If a change is detected, the team can then make changes to medications or other clinical interventions to prevent a heart failure flare-up requiring urgent hospitalisation. Click [here](#) for more.



Prof Faisal Sharif with clinical trial patient Richard Power.

## “My Stroke Journey” book launched in MUH



Adam Benjamin, Senior Physiotherapist in MUH.

Mayo University Hospital recently launched a book containing resources and supports for stroke patients and their families. The book, called “My Stroke Journey”, is a 67-page guide to all aspects of this life-threatening condition, developed by the multi-disciplinary stroke team in MUH in collaboration with patients.

The book is designed to help stroke survivors and families to understand and manage their diagnosis during their admission to hospital and also directs patients to the supports available in the community on discharge from hospital.

“My Stroke Journey” includes general information on stroke, types of stroke, treatments and hospital stay, how stroke may affect a person, how to manage your stroke lifestyle and medical risk factors and discharge planning. It also includes a directory on local and national supports available to stroke survivors, their families and carers. In the book, patients will find important checklists and questions to ask healthcare professionals about their stroke.

Click [here](#) for more.

## PUH Frailty at the Front Door Service

Portiuncula University Hospital's Frailty at the Front Door Service was introduced to provide a holistic assessment and intervention to patients over 75 presenting with frailty to the ED.

The service is ED based and identifies and assesses patients presenting with frailty and provides individualised interventions. Many people present to the service following a fall or with changes in their ability to complete everyday tasks.

Early comprehensive assessment can improve their healthcare outcomes and experience and can support their further recovery at home. Click [here](#) for more.

From left, Lisa O'Looney, Senior Physiotherapist; Maria Lennon, Senior Occupational Therapist; Karen Hurley, Assistant Staff Officer; Dr Shababat Ali, Geriatric Medical Registrar; Kelley Mc Carthy, Clinical Nurse Specialist.



## IBD Awareness Day PUH

"Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) Nurse Teresa McDonnell, held her first campaign on World IBD awareness day in Portlincula University Hospital on 19 May. Teresa had an information stand in main reception and promoted the IFCCA launch of the IBD has no age survey for 'Age 60 and over' to assess treatments and services available to this age group.



## Eurodoctors Masters Tournament



Drs David Gallagher (GUH); Fergus Cafferty (MUH); Greg Leonard (GUH); Brian Egan (MUH) who played in the Eurodoctors Masters Soccer Tournament representing Ireland in Salou in May 2023.

## Safe Staffing Framework GUH

Safe staffing is a National framework adapted by the Department of Health in 2018 and is rolled out on all Medical and Surgical wards in GUH.

Trendcare is a database that utilises a systematic, evidence based approach to determine Nurse / HCA staffing requirements based on patient acuity and dependency levels and has proven to stabilize the workforce, enhance patient care and increase staff satisfaction.

For the last number of months GUH have been engaging with staff and providing education and training sessions and responding to Staff needs.

Trendcare roster has now been implanted into all Medical and Surgical wards in and is the only roster used in GUH now. Data went live in June 2023 on 8 wards.

Phase two of the safe staffing framework is due to be rolled out in the Emergency Department in the middle of the summer. It is the future goal to implement the Safe Staffing Framework into all Hospitals and Community care settings.

## TY Programme SUH

The Research & Education Foundation at Sligo University Hospital welcome 26 TY Students from Sligo Secondary Schools as well as daughters and sons from SUH employees to the SUH Transition Year Work Experience Programme 'Finding your Future'. The 'Finding your Future' TY programme is a hospital wide programme offering an opportunity to meet with doctors, nurses, medical students and Health & Social Care Professionals, aiming to give an understanding of working in a healthcare setting and to promote the health professions as a career option.

The Students had the option to participate in a structured Work Experience Programme with the objective to provide an experience of working life across a multidisciplinary setting in the hospital.



St Patrick's Ward and the Shannon Ward were the first two wards to achieve their data going live.

## Read Mór: Arts Council gift books to patients in LUH and PUH

Patients in selected hospitals across the country have been gifted a free book on Culture Night / Oíche Chultúir 2023 by the Arts Council Letterkenny University Hospital and Portlincula University Hospital were delighted to be selected as one of seven hospitals nationally to participate in Read Mór, a wonderful Arts Council initiative to celebrate Culture Night.

The Read Mór book gifting project is now in its second year and offers patients in selected hospitals across the country an opportunity to get involved with Culture Night and escape to the furthest reaches of their imagination with a choice of 29 different books by Irish based authors and publishers. This year the Arts Council is proud to partner up with HSE Healthy Ireland. Read Mór ensures that more people, in more places can enjoy Culture Night.

Once finished reading, patients are encouraged to pass on their book when they leave hospital to a family member or friend. With a wide variety being gifted, some as Gaeilge, there are titles to suit all interests and ages, from novels, short stories, poetry, memoirs, to children's and young adult books. Audiobook versions of a selection of the titles are also available.



Mary Gormley and Amy Devenney, Brand Ambassadors with patient Ann Toland at Letterkenny University Hospital.



From left, Dr Lisa O'Sullivan, SPR, Obstetrics and Gynaecology; Dr Marie Christine De Tavernier, Consultant Obstetrician/Gynaecologist; Read Mór Representative; Ms Ron Goldaphel Alforque, Clinical Nurse Manager 1, St Clare's Ward; Dr Naser Shayoub, Registrar in Anaesthetics and Read Mór Representative.

## Magnet4Europe at LUH

LUH is one of 67 hospitals across Europe participating in the Magnet4Europe project, it is an international programme designed to create a culture of excellence, and by doing so, improve the health and wellbeing of nurses in their workplace.

Click [here](#) for more.



From left: Elizabeth Neely, ADON, Nurse Practice Development, LUH; Marie Callaghan, ADON, Magnet Coordinator, LUH; Prof Jonathan Drennan, Irish lead, Magnet4Europe Project; Dr Anne Drake, DON, LUH; Dr Noeleen Brady, Post-Doctoral Researcher, Magnet4Europe Project; and Sinead Fisher, CNM 3, Magnet, LUH.

## New clinic for Respiratory conditions in Moycullen

A new "one stop shop" for patients with asthma and COPD has opened its doors in the Moycullen Primary Care Centre, Co Galway. This clinic ensures that patients can access a consultant, a Clinical Nurse Specialist, Physiotherapist and Respiratory Physiologist and receive a diagnosis all on the same visit. Click [here](#) for more.



From left: Michaela McGoldrick, Senior Respiratory Physiologist; Ciara Sherlock, Respiratory Clinical Nurse Specialist; Philippa Needham, Respiratory Clinical Nurse Specialist; Niamh Duignan, Clinical Specialist Respiratory Physiotherapist; and Dr Sinead Walsh,

## SUH launch upgraded Paediatric Facilities



From left: Georgina Kilcoyne, Assistant Manager SUH; Amanda Kilcullen, Paediatric Dietician; Helen McGinn, Senior Paediatric Physiotherapist; Niamh Walsh, CNM; Charlie Ward a young patient in SUH; Bernie Clancy, CNM3 Paediatrics; Helena Gibbons Staff Nurse; Dr Diego Hernandez, Consultant Paediatrician; Dr Suzan Mohammed Paediatric Registrar; Leighann Flynn, Clerical Administration; Louise Farren, Staff Nurse and Rachel Wirtz, Clinical Specialist Paediatric and Neonatal Physiotherapist.

Young patients attending the Paediatric Outpatients and Physiotherapy Departments in Sligo University Hospital (SUH) can enjoy renovated spaces which focus on stimulation and play.

The Paediatric Outpatient play area was re-designed recently to create a more relaxing environment for children who are waiting for their appointment. The waiting area upgrade was supported by NMPDU Innovation funding and features a large marine themed mural, with lots of toys, activity boards and distractions for our young patients.

The Paediatric Physiotherapy Department has also undergone a renovation with the installation of a new overhead mobile, relaxing music and light projector for the ceiling.

These enhancements were made possible by generous donation from a local family whose daughter Maisie attends the Physiotherapy Department for treatment.

The Paediatric Physiotherapists at SUH assess and treat lots of babies and children with orthopaedic, musculoskeletal, respiratory or neurological conditions or developmental delay.

Click [here](#) for more.

## Lactation specialist at MUH



Earlier this year Mayo University Hospital appointed its first Clinical Midwife Specialist in Lactation, Mary Sammon. Mary has been looking after mothers and babies in the Maternity Unit as a midwife for 27 years but took up this specialist post to provide expert antenatal and postnatal breastfeeding support and education in MUH.

It's really important that parents are supported in their breastfeeding journey and supports for mothers beginning breastfeeding and for those who wish to continue on their return to work and beyond are being highlighted during National Breastfeeding Week (01 to 07 October). This year's theme is 'Making our communities and workplaces more breastfeeding friendly'.

Click [here](#) for more.

## New PALS Coordinators - GUH



Niamh a native from Galway previously worked as a Clinical Nurse Specialist on the infection prevention and control team in Galway University Hospitals. Prior to this, she gained valuable experience working with patients and their families having worked as a nurse and Clinical Nurse Manager in Portlincula University Hospital for 15 years. "We identify and work on initiatives by listening to what the patients tell us, all the while working in a friendly, confidential and impartial manner.

Una also a native from Galway trained as a midwife in UHG before heading to London where she worked as a Community Midwife. She moved back to Galway in 2021 and worked in the maternity department in UHG until taking up her new role in PALS.

Click [here](#) for more.

## PUH Pilot new Midwifery Service

A new pilot service, which will further enhance midwifery care, has been launched by the Maternity Department at PUH. The pilot will offer postnatal clinic appointments to all women on day five and day ten after their baby is born. Click [here](#) for more.



From left: Mairead Hannon, Staff Midwife; Vanessa Joyce, Staff Midwife; Deirdre Naughton, Director of Midwifery; Diane Fitzgerald, Staff Midwife and Rebecca Colohan, Clinical Midwife Manager.

## New Volunteer Coordinator at RUH



Michelle Brehon was recently appointed to the role of Volunteer Coordinator at RUH.

Michelle, worked as a Neuro Physiologist for 13 years at Children's Health Ireland (CHI) at Crumlin and for six years as a Cardiology Physiologist at the Midland Regional Hospital Tullamore where she gained valuable experience working with patients and their families as part of a Multidisciplinary team. Click [here](#) for more.

## Professor Kevin Barry inducted into ACS Academy of Master Surgeon Educators



Professor Kevin Barry, Consultant General Surgeon in Mayo University Hospital and Director of National Surgical Training Programmes in RSCI, has been admitted as a Member of the American College of Surgeons (ACS) Academy of Master Surgeon Educators.

Professor Barry was among a group of 63 esteemed surgical educators who were inducted at a ceremony on 6 October in Chicago.

Professor Barry has been a Consultant General Surgeon at Mayo University Hospital, where he established a Symptomatic Breast Clinic, since 1999. Click [here](#) for more.

## GUH Frailty at the Front Door



Patient Kathleen O Sullivan in her home in Galway with GUH Frailty Team's Therapy Assistant, Patricia Duffy.

The Frailty at the Front Door Service GUH commenced in 2021 and since then over 2,200 older patients have benefitted from targeted assessment and interventions to help them remain well at home.

The FFD service is a team of Physiotherapists, Clinical Nurse Specialists, Occupational Therapists and Geriatricians who work with patients over the age of 75 who present to the Emergency Department with frailty; this usually arises after a fall or because of changes in a patient's ability to complete everyday tasks.

Click [here](#) for more.

## GUH Physiotherapy November



Galway University Hospital Physiotherapy department recently had a fundraiser where 25 males in the department participated in November for Mens Health Awareness and raised €7,000 for Pieta House.

Well done to all of those who participated and contributed.

## RENEW Arts Project



SUH staff, patients and visitors have enjoyed live music on-site over the last 10 weeks as part of the 'RENEW Arts Project - Expanding Arts and Health across HSE Hospital Groups'. This is a joint initiative of the HSE, Healthy Ireland, the Arts Council and Creative Ireland which was funded by the Creative Ireland Programme.

Thank you to all of the musicians who joined us in SUH and the staff involved in making this happen.

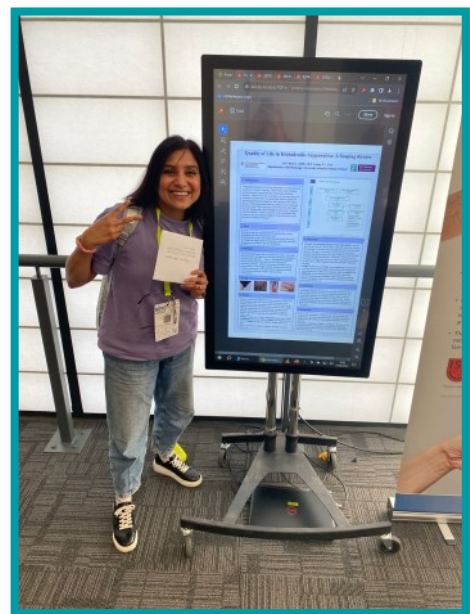
## Sports and Social Committee



Front row from left: Tracy Shannon, Margaret Martin, Fin Begley Grainne Sexton, Mary Mulvaney,  
Back row from left: Ann Gallagher, Niamh O'Donnell, Margaret Huston, Johanna Sweeney Linda Marsh, Angela McGinley, Winnie Felle and Anne Frize.

The LUH Sports and Social Committee at the Annual Christmas Dinner Dance with the award won at [#IMTIHA23](#) in the section of 'Workplace Wellbeing Champion'.

## Best Poster Presentation



Amrit Kaur a RANP from the Dermatology department in UHG won the best poster / presentation award at the British Dermatology Nursing Conference 2023. The poster was part of her research work on quality of life in Hidradenitis Suppurativa (Chronic skin condition). The conference was held at Harrogate convention centre in September, it was a big event for dermatology nurses from different parts of the world. There were 36 posters out of which Amrit Kaur won representing Galway University Hospitals at the conference as overall winner. This poster was accepted for presentation at Irish Association of Dermatology (IAD) in 2021 and recently accepted at EADV (European Association of Dermatology and Venereology) 2023 as an e-poster.

## New RANP at Roscommon Injury Unit



Newly appointed Registered Advanced Nurse Practitioner at Roscommon Injury Unit, Eoin McGinn.

Eoin McGinn has recently been appointed as Registered Advanced Nurse Practitioner in Emergency Nursing at Roscommon Injury Unit.

"I always had a keen interest in dealing with emergencies and working in an emergency setting, which inspired me to train as an Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP)," Eoin remarked. "I received excellent experience and abilities as an emergency nurse, and this experience supported my career choices. As an ANP I can continue to develop clinically as an independent practitioner for the benefit of my patients". Click [here](#) for more.

## SUH Herb Project



Dietary restrictions play a vital role in the successful long-term management of chronic kidney disease. Reducing salt intake is particularly important for the management of high blood pressure. High blood pressure is common in kidney disease. Therefore dietitians recommend that patients on dialysis (a type of treatment for end stage kidney disease) stop using salt and avoid eating salty foods. This is, in addition to other individualised dietary restrictions (potassium, phosphate, and fluid) depending on the patient's condition. The resulting renal diet can be bland and lacking in flavour, as well as limited in foods. Fresh herbs are a wonderful way of boosting the natural flavour of food, especially when one is following a low-salt diet.

Engaging in gardening activities and the natural environment provides a chance to take part in a meaningful occupation.

Liz Rafferty, Renal Dietitian and Treasa Purcell, Occupational Therapist at SUH developed the idea of creating a herb project to benefit their patients where patients could see the herbs being planted, grown, and then take some for their own use. Managers and the Sligo Branch of The Irish Kidney Association encouraged developing the project proposal and committed their support.

## "John's Campaign" at LUH



From left: Aoibheann Moreton, Quality and Patient Safety Team; Niamh O'Donnell, End of Life Care Co-ordinator; and Martina Porter, Quality and Patient Safety Manager in LUH.

Letterkenny University Hospital is delighted to announce the launch of "John's Campaign", a new initiative which ensures that family carers are welcomed in the hospital as active partners in patient care. Click [here](#) for more.

## PUH Echocardiography Department receives European Accreditation



From left, Professor Aidan Flynn, Consultant Cardiologist; Andrea Cooke, Cardiac Physiologist; Carol Glynn, Healthcare Assistant; Caroline Hanniffy, Cardiac Physiologist; Claire Mc Dermott, Chief II Cardiac P hysiolgist; Ann Donohue, Cardiac Physiologist; Dr N ria Fare, Consultant Cardiologist; Niamh Corigan, Cardiac Physiologist and James Keane, Hospital Manager.

Portlincula University Hospital has recently received European accreditation for the Echocardiography Department by the European Society of Cardiology (ESC) following a process of quality standards and improvements.

Click [here](#) for more.

## New Adult Cystic Out Patient Department



Once complete, the Adult CF OPD will have sufficient capacity, design features and specification to allow for best practices in Cystic Fibrosis treatment.

The new build will minimise cross infection and enable the Merlin Park University Hospital CF multidisciplinary professional team to provide long-term, recurrent support for ambulatory patients.

The project consists of replacement accommodation for Adult Cystic Fibrosis OPD services.

The facility will take approx. 9 months to construct. It will cost an estimated €3.7 Million to complete, with the CF association contributing €700,000. Click [here](#) for more.

## Hybrid Children's Nursing Diploma



From left: Amy Gannon; Helen Rooney; Faith Zinyemba; Agnieszka Maria Kuczyńska; Lorna Middleton; and Soumya Assariparambil Renjan. (absent from photo is Cáit Costello)

**Seven nurse specialists graduate from Saolta's first hybrid post-graduate Children's Nursing Diploma in conjunction with CHI and Trinity College Dublin.** Huge congratulations to the class of 2022-2023 on this wonderful achievement.

## PUH New 12 Bed Ward



PUH has officially opened the Dunlo Ward, a new 12 bed ward comprising of eight single ensuite rooms and two double ensuite rooms.

The additional beds was part of the capital funding from the HSE 2020 Capital Plan, costing in excess of €5m for the design, build and equipping of the ward.

The new ward is located on the first floor of the hospital and has state of the art facilities including a digital Irish National Early Warning System (INEWS). This system also provides access to diagnostics including Laboratory and Radiology in each room. The Dunlo Ward will care for both medical and surgical patients and will provide additional isolation rooms for the hospital.

Click [here](#) for more.

## Christmas Tree lights at UHG



Rugby Union player Bundee Aki officially switched on the Christmas Tree lights at UHG on 10 December with the Conquerors kicking off the afternoon's festivities and a visit from Santa.

Joan Healy from the Children's Remembrance Day Committee said, As a committee, we are delighted that the tradition of "Our Christmas Tree becoming Your Tree" continues. For every light that was sponsored, a specially designed Christmas card was given to the purchaser, the card representing the light is a way of letting family and friends know that you are thinking of them and to those families who may have loved ones who have emigrated and will not be home for Christmas, by sponsoring a light, lets them know they are in our thoughts.

# Report on rollout of Covid-19 Vaccination Programme



The Saolta University Health Care Group is pleased to officially launch an in-depth look back report on the rollout of the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme across the West and Northwest.

The 80-page report details the challenges, progress and successes of the programme, from rapidly setting up vaccination centres and satellite centres, ensuring a constant vaccine supply chain and reacting to peaks and sudden troughs of demand including vaccinating a peak of 42,000 people per week at the height of the programme.

Ireland's vaccination programme began on 29 December 2020 with the initial rollout focusing on healthcare workers in frontline services and the 65 and older cohort in long term residential care facilities. Click [here](#) for more.

## #OurPeople

**Name:** Gillian Shanahan

**Job Title:** Organ Donation Nurse Manager

**Location:** Intensive Care Unit University Hospital Galway

### How did you get interested in the role of Nurse Practice Development Coordinator?

As an Intensive Care Nurse, I have cared for patients on their organ donation journey. The strength and kindness of bereaved families that consider and agree to organ donation is awe-inspiring. Their willingness to save the lives of others during their unexpected grief is truly humbling. The remarkable acts of Organ Donors and their families were my inspiration and motivation to become an Organ Donation Nurse Manager.



### What is a typical day?

My working day is varied and unpredictable which I enjoy. Flexibility is essential in order to support organ donation assessments and referrals which are always my priority.

I receive a call from a nurse or doctor in an Intensive Care Unit or Emergency Department in one of the five hospitals within the Saolta University Healthcare Group, notifying me of a potential donation case.

The clinical history is discussed and I note any details which may be relevant in assessing the suitability of the patient. I provide clinical advice on the management of the patient's physiological parameters to ensure organ donation can be explored. Once on site, I meet with the healthcare team in the ICU and get a comprehensive handover to enable me to assess the possibility of donation. Family conversations regarding donations are provided with great care and attention. A key part of my role is attending end-of-life discussions with the patient's family and offer organ donation as an option. When a family agrees to proceed with organ donation, I facilitate the completion and submission of the referral to Organ Donation Transplant Ireland. Supporting families involves clear and timely communication underpinned by specialist knowledge of the organ donation process. I am available throughout the process to answer questions that the family may have. I provide our Irish Hospice Foundation awarded 'Thinking of You Memory Making Initiative' as part of our end-of-life care to all organ donor families within the Saolta University Health Care Group.

I remain in the ICU up until the time of the arrival of the National Procurement Service. I meet with the family for the final time and thank them for considering and agreeing to organ donation.

I work with a very supportive team in my base hospital at University Hospital Galway. I am also very fortunate to be part of a network of five other Organ Donation Nurse colleagues nationally who are highly skilled clinical experts. Our aim is to ensure that organ donation is considered where appropriate.

### If you had to describe your job in three words... or one sentence... what would it be?

I would describe my role as continually evolving, and inspiringly challenging with a great sense of purpose that drives my motivation.

### What is the most rewarding part of your job?

Although many may see my role as very sad in dealing with deceased patients and grieving families. I feel honoured and privileged in fulfilling an organ donor's final wish and I have often been fortunate to witness the solace and comfort organ donation gives to bereaved families left behind.



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