

# UltraNews

eNewsletter of Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate



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UltraNews newsletter is intended for circulation among staff members of Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate. Extracts from UltraNews should not be published without the permission of the editor.



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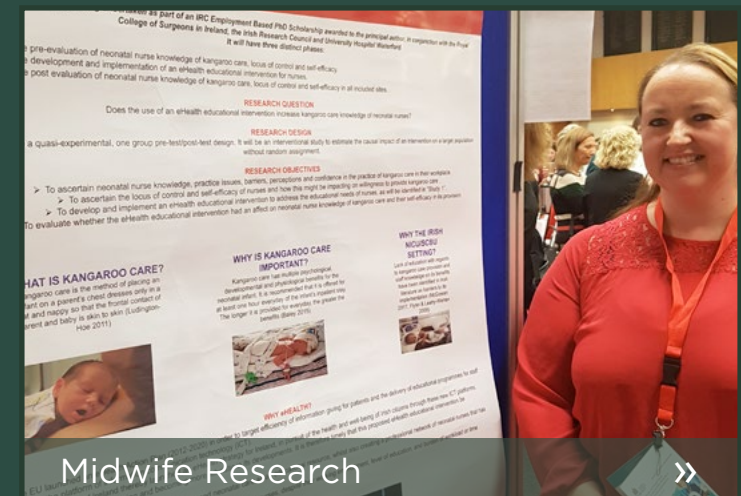
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# Welcome to the Autumn edition of UltraNews, the Ireland South staff newsletter

## Sustaining our efforts in the face of challenges

We welcome you to the new academic year. I hope you all have had the opportunity to take a refreshing staycation and recharge the batteries.

Another influenza season is right around the corner and this year, we're expecting to face it with COVID-19 in our midst. It is now more important than ever to protect ourselves from the flu, not only to keep ourselves and our loved ones safe, but to protect our patients and our entire community. This year we have set ourselves a Directorate-wide target of 95% uptake of the flu vaccine, to minimise the impact of the approaching influenza season and preserve resources for our healthcare colleagues to care for patients with COVID-19.

We are now in our fourth year of operation and Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate is growing in recognition as a network of maternity units collaborating and supporting one another to improve outcomes for the

women, infants and families we serve. We collectively discuss and agree on the new ways of working, including the levels of restrictions in place across our maternity, gynaecology and neonatal units, with safety and wellbeing in mind. To understand the impact of visiting restrictions, we will be conducting an anonymous survey of mothers who have had babies in our units in Cork, Kerry, Waterford and Tipperary during the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of the study is to share findings internally as well as all with other maternity hospitals as regards the patient experience, which may contribute to future decision making and research.

In Cork University Maternity Hospital, we are delighted to have won a 2020 HSE Service Excellence Award for cutting our gynaecology outpatient waiting list by 75 per cent. While we undoubtedly have suffered setbacks in 2020 due to COVID-19, we're not giving up. It's now time to reinvent our approach and get the gynaecology service back up and running in the face of many challenges.

It's heart-warming to read about the praise for staff in South Tipperary General Hospital and the evidence of humanity and kindness alongside professionalism

in their care. The difference that this makes to our patients and their families is a positive reminder for us all in these challenging times.

University Hospital Kerry responded early and admirably on the effects COVID-19 was having on the traditional facilitation of antenatal education, by producing a number of short educational videos for online viewing. These useful resources build patients' knowledge and skills using evidence based messages and are published on CUMH and UHK maternity websites as well as on our Twitter account @IrelandSouthWID.

Congratulations to Colette Cunningham, a midwife in University Hospital Waterford on becoming a Munster finalist in the Health Innovation Hub of Ireland's 'Spark Ignite' competition that asked HSE staff to enter solutions or services that could positively impact healthcare. Colette's idea for a mobile phone cleaner for use in hospital and NICU settings presents an interesting opportunity for healthcare settings to benefit from the reduction of infection transmission risk, especially in these current times.

It is well recognised that this COVID-19 pandemic will be with us for some time,

and the degree of related restrictions on our society and economy will ebb and flow alongside the rate of infections.

With this in mind, I ask that you to reflect on how we can continue to protect ourselves, our patients and our families. Feel free to contact me directly with your thoughts or comments.

While we need to be wary of response fatigue, we remain very grateful for the partnership, support and cooperation of staff and parents to date. Thank you for your hard work and understanding. It remains a true honour and privilege to work alongside such resolute and committed people, and we in turn are privileged to provide care to the women, babies and families in our region.

### **John R. Higgins**

Clinical Director  
Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate  
Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology  
University College Cork  
South/South West Hospital Group

# COLLECTIVE IRELAND SOUTH EFFORT NEEDED: FLU VACCINATION MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER!



The flu season starts in Ireland in September/October, with peaks around December/January. The COVID-19 'new normal' means that preparing for the upcoming flu season is critical.

Flu symptoms share many similarities to COVID-19 and this will obviously lead to anxiety and complications. Furthermore, if significant transmission of COVID-19 takes place alongside a demanding flu season, the health system will face an even bigger crisis. We can each play a part in reducing the impact of the approaching flu season by ensuring, as healthcare workers, we get vaccinated against the latest strain of influenza.

Vaccination has been shown to have many benefits including reducing the risk of flu illnesses, reduced hospitalisations and reductions in the risk of flu-related death. As

healthcare workers, we have a duty of care to do all we can to avoid cross contamination and protect the vulnerable women who attend our service as well as protecting each other and our families.

**This year, Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate is aiming to achieve a target of 95% flu vaccine uptake among healthcare workers.** This compares with an uptake in 2019 of 53% across the HSE, up from 45% in 2018. We all recognise that there is quite a bit of work to do to reach this new target.

Please reflect on the value for you and those around you of getting the influenza vaccine this year. The Flu eLearning Module has been updated for 2020 and is live on HSeLanD, the Health Service Executive's online learning and development portal. It is a mandatory programme for all HSE healthcare workers and gives information and updates regarding the flu vaccination this season. The module will take about 10 minutes to complete.

To access the Flu Vaccine – Protect Yourself, Protect Others programme, search for the title on the homepage of [www.hseland.ie](http://www.hseland.ie)

A big thanks to the peer vaccinators across Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate for running vaccination clinics and to everyone in our maternity units for getting the vaccine and for promoting the flu vaccine.

**Professor John R. Higgins, Clinical Director Ireland South Woman and Infants Directorate said:** *"The flu vaccine is safe and especially important this year for our staff to protect themselves, their families and the women and infants in our care. Thanks to all peer vaccinators in our Directorate for their dedication to keeping our staff and patients safe this winter with COVID-19 in our midst. Let's work together collectively to achieve the Directorate wide target of 95% flu vaccine uptake; we owe it to ourselves, our patients, our healthcare colleagues and our community."*

See details below on what each of our units are doing this year as regards flu jabs. Note that clinics are not due to commence this year until after the first week of October as there are delays with vaccine production due to COVID-19.

### Cork University Maternity Hospital

- Sinéad Creedon is the new Infection Prevention & Control Clinical Nurse Specialist for CUMH and is leading the peer vaccination campaign 'Shot on the Spot', the CUMH influenza peer vaccination campaign.
- This year CUMH staff will all be vaccinated on the CUMH campus only, due to COVID-19. There will be a vaccination station opposite Security at main Reception. There will also mobile vaccination stations around the hospital, visiting all clinical areas.
- CUMH has secured prizes for staff again this year to enhance uptake.



**Above:** Flu vaccination campaign lead in CUMH, Sinéad Creedon, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Infection Prevention & Control

### University Hospital Waterford

- Janet Murphy, Advanced Midwife Practitioner is leading the flu vaccination campaign in UHW Maternity services again this year. Helen Patmore is also a peer vaccinator.
- This year, UHW will build on the success of previous years by employing large numbers of peer vaccinators on site and having 24-hour availability of vaccinations during the season. There is also a strong drive to increase the number of peer vaccinators available in UHW this year.
- The flu committee convened by the Director of Nursing, Orla Kavanagh continues to give voice to the importance of the uptake of the vaccine by all staff in UHW. Ms Kavanagh has secured prizes for staff to enhance uptake.
- The Clinical Placement Coordinator, Gemma Poole is the Flu Champion for UHW and rosters the vaccinators to maximise the availability of the vaccine for staff. In addition, there is a steering committee to streamline information to vaccinators in order to ensure all updated information required is available.
- The UHW uptake of peer vaccinations is to be maximised before end of October 2020 in order to have early protection for flu season for all staff.



**Left:** Flu vaccination campaign lead in UHW, Janet Murphy, Advanced Midwife Practitioner

### University Hospital Kerry

- The facilitation and administration of the flu vaccine will be structured differently in UHK this season due to COVID-19. Previously, the Occupational Health Department provided the administration of the flu vaccine in UHK.
- This year, UHK Maternity Services will have their own trained peer-to-peer vaccinators including Mary Stack Courtney, CMM3; Omana Paul, CMM3 MN CMS; Joann Malik, AMP and Mairead O'Sullivan, Lactation Consultant.
- The flu vaccine will be administered to maternity staff within the maternity services location in UHK.
- The aim is to promote the vaccine at weekly maternity governance meetings. Posters and information leaflets will be placed in staff areas.
- The team of vaccinators and senior management in UHK Maternity Services are encouraging all maternity staff in UHK to make a concerted effort this year and 'get the Flu Vaccine, not the Flu'!



**Above:** Pictured in UHK in 2019: Getting into the spirit of the Fight Flu campaign are Bernie Carroll, peer vaccinator with Dr Paul Hughes, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, Mary Stack Courtney, CNM3 and Joan Meehan, peer vaccinator

### South Tipperary General Hospital

- Mary O'Donnell, CMM3, will lead the flu vaccination campaign in STGH Maternity Services again this year, and will be supported by Siobhán Kavanagh, CMM2 (note Siobhán is retired and returns each year as a peer vaccinator for the fight flu campaign).
- While the vaccine will be available in the Outpatients Department in STGH again this year, another location is also being confirmed.
- There will be a strong drive to build on previous year's progress and increase the uptake of the flu vaccine in STGH.



**Pictured in STGH:** Right: Mary O'Donnell, CMM3 is leading out on the STGH flu campaign for maternity services. Left: Siobhán Kavanagh is retired but returns to STGH each year as a peer vaccinator for the Fight Flu campaign!

# Flu Vaccine for Healthcare Workers

It takes just a few minutes to protect yourself and the people around you.

You are 10 times more likely to get flu

1 in 5 healthcare workers develop flu every year.



Flu is serious

Up to 500 people die from flu every year in Ireland.

Flu causes pneumonia and bronchitis and can make chronic health conditions worse.



You can spread flu without knowing it

Some people have no symptoms.

Your patients rely on you to protect them

People with weakened immune systems or who have underlying health conditions rely on you to be vaccinated to protect them against flu.



You can protect your family and those around you

Getting the flu vaccine also protects your family, your colleagues and the patients you care for.

Flu vaccine is safe

It's been given to millions of people for more than 60 years.

[hse.ie/flu](https://www.hse.ie/flu)  
Public Health Advice

Order Code: HN100467



# ‘Shot on the Spot’, the CUMH influenza peer vaccination campaign

Interview with Sinéad Creedon, CNS in Infection Prevention & Control in CUMH



## Tell us a bit about who you are?

My name is Sinéad Creedon and I started my new role as the Infection Prevention & Control Clinical Nurse Specialist for CUMH in August 2020. I have been involved in promoting and administering peer vaccination as well as patient vaccination for the past five years in a large multinational company in Cork, where uptake is high.

This year CUMH is launching ‘Shot on the Spot’, the influenza peer vaccination campaign. We are expecting maximum impact for the 2020 / 2021 flu season and I would like to provide some information on influenza vaccination and its many benefits to you, to our patients and also to your families and loved ones.

## What is the current uptake of the flu vaccine in CUMH for healthcare workers, compared with the national figures?

The national uptake for 2019 was 53%. The CUMH uptake for 2019 was 38% (254 people) which consisted of 173 nursing / midwifery staff, 48 medical, 24 administration staff and 9 others. This number included anybody from CUMH who was vaccinated on the CUH campus.

Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate have set a Directorate-wide target of 95% uptake of the flu vaccine this year. Ireland has a poor track-record in general for peer influenza vaccination and that is due to lack of

knowledge, belief systems and myths surrounding the flu vaccine.

## What is Influenza?

Influenza is an acute viral infection which causes annual epidemics and peaks during winter months particularly in the northern hemisphere. Vaccination of healthcare workers has been shown to reduce flu-related deaths by up to 40%.

## Can you help with some myth busting around the flu vaccine?

Anti-vaccination is nothing more than a “belief system”. It is based merely on stories on what people think and believe, in the absence of any medical or science based evidence.

A survey of over 3,000 NHS staff reported that unvaccinated staff were significantly more likely to respond that it was too much trouble to get the vaccine, they felt less at risk of getting flu, and they thought the vaccine would make them feel unwell. Sound familiar? These are not reasons to not get the flu vaccine.

Did you know that flu vaccines have been around for over 50 years? You CANNOT get the flu from the flu vaccine. The flu vaccine starts to work within two weeks of getting it – some people become unwell with other circulating viruses in this time period and mistakenly think it was the vaccination that caused their illness.



The vaccine does not prevent 'influenza-like' illnesses caused by other circulating viruses.

Influenza viruses are always changing. The WHO monitors Influenza strains in their surveillance laboratories every year and recommends which strains are included in seasonal flu vaccine every year. So, it's a different vaccine every year. That's why it's an annual vaccination.

One in every four or five healthcare workers will get influenza every flu season. Remember, over 50% of influenza cases are asymptomatic in healthcare workers!

#### Where can I get the flu vaccine in Cork / CUMH?

The flu vaccine is free of charge at CUMH and nationally over the coming months.

You can receive it here in your clinical area or at main reception. If you receive it at the pharmacy or at your GP practice, that's no problem; please let us know so we can count you in our uptake figures! Everybody counts, right?

The flu vaccine is an injection given into the muscle in the upper arm and takes less than 60 seconds. The most common side effect is soreness at the injection site for 24-48 hours. Pregnant women are at increased risk of influenza-related complications, therefore it is the duty of every employee at CUMH to protect our vulnerable patients.  
*CDC –Pregnant women and influenza (flu)*  
<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/highrisk/pregnant.htm>

#### Why is the flu jab even more important this year?

Did you know that in a Lancet study conducted in 2014, approximately 75% infections were asymptomatic (no symptoms of flu but a positive serology) across several outbreaks? Healthcare workers were considered the likely source of infection after investigation of the cases (*Lancet Respir Med 2014; 2: 445–54*).

COVID-19 needs no introduction, but this year we desperately need to shield our hospitals against the possibility of double pandemics of both COVID-19 and influenza to help reduce the burden on our already delicate health system. Therefore, it is imperative that each of us thinks very carefully this year about our duties and obligations, both as health care workers and fellow human beings, as we battle together against COVID-19.

Although not mandatory, the Medical Council of Ireland state 'it's your duty to protect yourself from common infectious diseases' and the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) recommends influenza vaccine for all nurses and midwives.

#### Does peer vaccination work?

YES! The Centre for Disease Control undertook a systematic review of the literature available and they concluded that HCW vaccination can enhance patient safety. One of their studies showed a 40% reduction of influenza related deaths in hospitals with higher rates of HCW influenza vaccination (*Carman WF et al.*

*Effects of influenza vaccination of health-care workers on mortality of elderly people in long-term care: a randomised controlled trial. Lancet 2000;355:93–7).*

We are actively seeking peer vaccinators for all clinical areas across CUMH. We would urge all senior midwifery and nurse managers to please nominate peer vaccinators from their clinical area as soon as possible and forward the details to Avril Stannard ([avril.stannard@hse.ie](mailto:avril.stannard@hse.ie)) so that peer vaccination training can take place over the coming weeks.

**Get your flu shot on the spot: it costs many people their lives, but it will cost you nothing!**



# UHK Maternity Services response to COVID-19

by Mairin McElligott, Project Lead Maternity Service, UHK



University Hospital Kerry (UHK) Maternity Services were required to act swiftly in the preparation for and response to the COVID-19 pandemic. They did so under the exceptional guidance of the Director of Midwifery, Sandra O'Connor; Clinical Lead for Maternity Services, Dr Paul Hughes (Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist) and UHK hospital management and adopted a proactive approach in such unprecedented times.

*'There was massive apprehension and anxiety amongst the women regarding coming into the hospital setting with COVID-19. Our main goal was to allay any of these fears.'* **Clodagh Queally, Clinical Midwife Manager**

COVID-19 has affected a number of aspects of maternity services in UHK, including visiting hours, services offered and methods of delivering women centred care. These changes have brought about new skills and advances in the adoption of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) into the acute healthcare setting. Additional training has included such topics as PPE training and resuscitation with the PPEs.



Ways of working that fundamentally involve facilitating social distancing in UHK include:

- Essential staff only attending handovers and observing social distancing
- Teleconferences becoming the norm
- Remote working
- Environment marker to indicate social distancing in canteen
- Security check at hospital entrance
- Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs)

In a bid to minimise contact with the acute setting, the need for maternity services outreach clinics and virtual booking clinics was identified. The Maternity Department worked tirelessly with the wonderful and supportive staff of Centre Point Community Building and Institution of Technology Tralee (North Campus) to get this up and running.

This was possible thanks to the midwives and doctors adopting a teamwork approach and due to continuous communication between the key stakeholders, as there was only a matter of days between the new concept becoming realised and operational. A united focus on

providing a high level of woman-centred care also guided progress.

Clinics were established in the very narrow time frame of a week:

- Maternity Services Antenatal Outreach Clinics
- Virtual Antenatal Education
- Maternity Services Virtual Booking Clinics
- Virtual Diabetic Clinics
- Newborn Hearing Screening Programme has been relocated to a Maternity Service Outreach Clinic
- Virtual Gynaecological Clinics



The Maternity Services Outreach and Virtual Booking Clinic has been set up and run by the professional and flexible midwifery staff in the Fetal Assessment Unit (FAU). This includes



Clodagh Queally, Linda O’Sullivan, Sharon Cotter, Ann Sparks, Martina O’Sullivan D’Arcy and the UHK doctors Dr Hanif, Dr Khalid, Dr El Tayeb Al Mola, Dr Ilyas, Dr Bossaghzadeh, Dr Tabassum and Dr Abdelrahman Abdelgabar Abdelkarim.

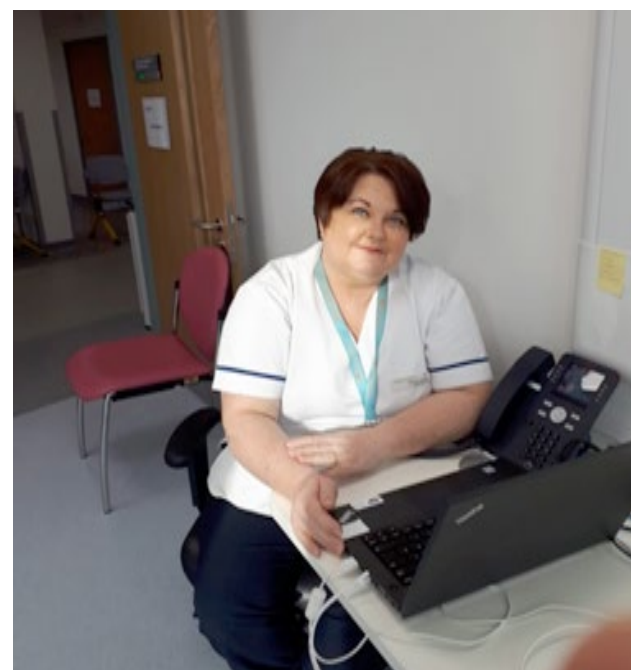


Clinics are enabling:

- Women to remain in their own environment or reducing contacts in the acute hospital setting
- Women to avoid prolonged duration in the acute hospital setting
- Reduction in the amount of travelling/ contacts accrued by the women

The impact on staff during COVID-19, has required the UHK’s multi-professional teams to be flexible, adaptable and committed to the continued delivery of the high quality care for women and babies during these uncertain times. Staff have been redeployed or seen their service delivery method changed in a matter of days and they have responded with courage, determination and teamwork in supporting each other and the service through this global pandemic. Women using the service have given positive

feedback regarding the outreach clinics, describing them as a relaxing and comfortable environment.



*‘Sharon Cotter, our lead Midwife has played an integral part in ensuring the smooth running of the outreach clinic. She has been fantastic, showing great enthusiasm and initiative. A midwife and obstetric registrar attend the outreach clinic and see a number of low risk patients, reducing the number of women attending the hospital.’* **Clodagh Queally, Clinical Midwife Manager**

UHK Maternity Services have embraced the use of additional ICT into their daily working life. Some examples of these include virtual booking clinics, outreach clinics and virtual gynaecological clinics. Antenatal classes are currently being delivered via YouTube videos by the multi-professional team for women to enjoy from the comfort of their own homes.

Future endeavours include the use of VCreate video/photo software in UHK, enabling parents to view their baby in the Neonatal Unit in the coming weeks.



There were a number of UHK departments instrumental in the roll out of these clinics, including:

- Fetal Assessment Unit
- Gynae Ward
- Diabetic Department
- Supplies Department
- Biomedical Department
- IT Department
- MN-CMS Local Back Office
- Clerical Department
- Obs & Gynae teams
- Midwifery & Nursing
- UHK Hospital Management

Community spirit has been remarkable! UHK has been inundated with donations of food and gifts from our community, for which we are very grateful.

*‘I wish to thank everyone involved for their time, support and teamwork, in bringing about and embracing a new way of caring for women and babies with these milestone clinics. The implementation of these clinics has advanced the use of ICT and highlighted its benefits within the acute healthcare setting.’* **Mairin McElligott, Project Lead Maternity Service, UHK**



We in UHK Maternity Services wish to thank the fantastic work of all of the staff in Tralee IT North Campus and in the Centre Point Community Building. Without their teamwork and committed support, this would not have been possible in such an ambitious timeframe. Lastly, we wish to thank the women attending the service for their continued support, patience and compliance with the current national recommendations.

Keep safe.

# Preparing for Labour, Birth and Breastfeeding: Educational Videos from UHK

By Mary O'Connor, Specialist Co-ordinator, Midwifery, KCNME, UHK

The screenshot displays the UHK Maternity Care website interface. At the top, the University Hospital Kerry logo is visible alongside navigation tabs for Labour Videos, Antenatal Videos, Breastfeeding Videos, and Postnatal Videos. Below this, a section titled 'Helpful Videos from UHK for Expectant Mothers' provides a guide to the content. A row of four video thumbnails illustrates various topics: a woman in a labouring position, a woman holding a baby, a woman speaking, and a woman with a baby. Below the thumbnails are four buttons labeled 'Labour', 'Antenatal', 'Breastfeeding', and 'Postnatal', each with a 'WATCH VIDEOS' button. To the left, 'UHK Maternity Services - Contact Details' lists several departments with their respective phone numbers. On the right, a video player shows a woman holding a sign that reads 'of the maternity unit'.

The effects of the Coronavirus pandemic restrictions on the traditional facilitation of antenatal education, required the maternity staff in UHK to respond to the needs of women and their partners to continue to provide the valuable service of antenatal education. As a result, a number of short educational videos were developed and launched online. All pregnant women attending the maternity services in UHK were informed of the antenatal education online resource.

The educational online videos present a valuable opportunity to build a woman's confidence in her ability to give birth and provide pregnant women and their partners with the knowledge and skills that may assist them during labour, birth and early parenting during the restrictions of COVID-19.

The antenatal educational videos were facilitated by: Bríd Brosnan,

Senior Physiotherapist in Women's Health, UHK; Máiréad O'Sullivan, RGN/IBCLC, UHK and Mary O'Connor, Specialist Co-ordinator, Midwifery, KCNME, UHK. A range of topics were covered such as: The importance of the pelvic floor exercises; positions for labour and birth; breathing for labour and birth; creating a supportive environment for labour and birth; the supportive role of the birth partner; breastfeeding; recognition of postnatal depression and some early parenting skills such as safe sleep positions and nappy changing. The videos can be viewed on <http://uhk.ie/maternity/> and have also been made available on Cork University Maternity Hospital's website. In addition, they are linked from the HSE <https://mychild.ie/> website and have been publicised on Twitter by both @IrelandSouthWID and @Hospital\_Kerry.

# Praise for care at South Tipperary General Hospital 'It was touching to feel the humanity shining through'

Previously published in HealthMatters Summer 2020

The staff of South Tipperary General Hospital (STGH) have been praised for their 'remarkable kindness, friendliness, respectfulness and hospitality' after the loss of a loved one during the COVID-19 pandemic. Caroline Lennon-Nally, who is on the National Quality Improvement Team and a member of the COVID-19 National Contact Management Programme (CMP) explained that her family had limited experience of the Clonmel hospital until recently when a beloved elderly family member, Joan, was brought to the hospital by ambulance after having a fall in her home on Easter Saturday. Later that day she was admitted to the gynae ward in STGH. "As a family member who is also a healthcare professional, it was heartening and touching to see and feel humanity shining through professionalism," said Caroline. "This was a significant concern for us as a family because during those initial weeks, as a result of COVID-19, visiting was not permitted. We would contact the hospital ward in the morning and evening to enquire about Joan's wellbeing. On a few occasions it was difficult to get through to the ward, but when this was communicated to management, we were provided with another number, which made it easier to contact the staff on the ward," she explained.

In telephone conversations with the ward manager and the nurses that were taking care of Joan, Caroline explained that it was reassuring for the family to hear that all necessary tests and x-rays were being undertaken, and that her care needs were being prioritised. "There were many times in those first few weeks when we phoned the ward, and the nurse looking after Joan would

offer to bring the phone to her so that we could have a conversation, which was comforting for all concerned. Unfortunately, on Thursday, May 7th, we received that dreaded call from the ward manager to advise us that there had been a deterioration in Joan's condition, but because she had tested negative for COVID-19, the hospital would allow two people to visit her."

When Joan's healthcare needs changed from acute care to palliative care, she was moved into a private room ensuite on the gynae ward. "It was a great consolation to us to be able to visit her, to hold her hand, and to sit with her in privacy for lengthy periods of time. It was also comforting for the family that staff didn't hesitate to contact us when they were concerned about further deterioration in her condition," she said. "During those last few weeks we experienced the essence of good care. We brought a large angel candle to place on her bedside locker, but as there was oxygen in the room, it wasn't possible to light the candle. However, the next time we arrived, we found a small battery operated candle had been placed on top of the angel candle - so it looked like the angel candle was lit. There were also some dried flowers placed on a window ledge along with other items to make the room more homely.

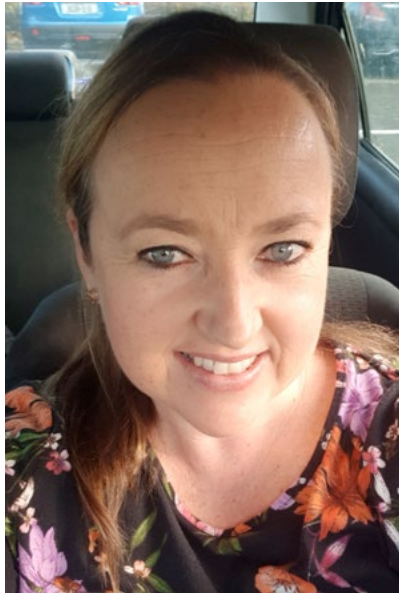
"Joan's intimate care was impeccable every time we visited, and this was regardless of staff being aware of our arrival or not. We also found the kindness, friendliness, respectfulness and hospitality of all staff that we encountered to be remarkable. On the morning that Joan passed away, the nurse looking after her that night

phoned at 6.45am to let us know that she was concerned because Joan seemed weaker. At 7am, that same nurse called again to let us know that our beloved Joan had passed away peacefully, and to reassure us that staff were around her and she had not died alone.

"It's never easy to lose someone you love but the loss is more bearable when you have a strong sense that the people caring for your loved one are doing their best for them. If we were to name what it was that was most striking about the staff in the gynae ward in STGH, it would be their obvious humanity, which was always evident despite their high level of professionalism. As a family member who is also a healthcare professional, it was heartening and touching to see and feel humanity shining through professionalism. It made such a positive difference to both Joan, and us, her family," added Caroline.



**Pictured above:** STGH Women's Health Service staff; Rose Dougliss, CNM2; Danny Irwin, Staff Nurse; Kate Fitzgerald, Staff Nurse; Priyia Scarlah, Staff Nurse



## Mobile phones: an infection transmission risk in the neonatal hospital setting

By Colette Cunningham, Senior Neonatal Intensive Care Nurse, UHW

I was delighted to become a Munster finalist in the Health Innovation Hub of Ireland (HIHI) 'Spark Ignite' business competition in June 2020. This was in relation to an idea for a mobile phone cleaner, useful in reducing infection transmission risks. This idea is especially important in these current times.

As a Senior Neonatal Intensive Care Nurse, I have a keen interest in evidence based practices. I founded the Journal Club here in University Hospital Waterford (UHW) and was delighted to successfully reach the list of HIHI finalists with a presentation I formatted originally for our club.

My idea for a mobile phone cleaner came from my ongoing interest in quality improvement projects that ultimately benefit the neonatal infants in our care. Healthcare associated infections present major challenges to our healthcare system and neonatal infants are particularly prone to infection due to their immature immune systems. Maintaining adequate infection control practices in NICUs is vital. Mobile phones have been proven to be a reservoir for infections and we know that contaminated surfaces play a major role in the spread of infectious diseases.

Considering immature neonatal systems and mobile phone use in the NICU setting, this is a huge concern. Banning mobile phones is not generally supported by clinicians because of their value in patient care. Despite clean hands, 'dirty' mobile phones increase the risk of transfer of bacterial pathogens.

We looked at many practices in UHW including the cleaning of mobiles with alcohol wipes, or the covering of phones with plastic coverings - but these were discounted due to either the possible damage they may cause, or the impact on environmental factors.

This resulted me in researching for solutions. The answer I found is a UV hospital grade mobile phone cleaner assembled by Hytech for AUVS. Hytech is an Irish company based in Dublin, contracted to assemble these mobile phone cleaners. They can clean 99.99% of infectious pathogens in 55 secs, including COVID-19. They are a tried and tested solution used in many industries to date and are currently in widespread use across the NICU setting in the US.

The cost of an individual unit is in the region of 3,000-4,500 euros but naturally, the more systems an institution buys, the lower the cost per unit will be.

It is worth keeping in mind that the UVC cleaner in question can be used to clean name badges, pens, stethoscopes etc. in both a hospital and NICU setting.

I believe this cleaner presents a wonderful opportunity for our service as a whole to benefit from the reduction of infection transmission risk, especially in these current times.



Above: The Hytech AUVS UV mobile phone cleaning system



# Meet Majella Phelan, Smoking Cessation Midwife, CUMH

**We're delighted to introduce Majella Phelan and talk to her about her new role as the first Smoking Cessation Midwife in Cork University Maternity Hospital**

## **1) Tell us a bit about your role and the breadth of services covered?**

I am commencing the role of Smoking Cessation Midwife in Cork University Maternity Hospital (CUMH) to support pregnant women who currently smoke. This is a new position in the hospital, and I am very passionate about the role as smoking during pregnancy is associated with significant health risks for both mother and baby. It is also the one modifiable issue that directly affects the outcome of a pregnancy. This is a Sláintecare integration funded project and is commencing on two sites: CUMH and The National Maternity Hospital, Dublin.

Currently, pregnant women are screened for smoking at booking and referred to the Regional Health Promotion Officer. This new role is introducing a dedicated Smoking Cessation Midwife for the maternity services in CUMH. It will involve the training of midwifery staff to provide carbon monoxide breath testing (COBT) for all pregnant women booking into the service and facilitating the training of staff in the Making Every Contact Count programme. We hope that COBT can be introduced to CUMH at a future date. This monitors CO levels from cigarettes in the body and gives women tangible evidence that their effort to quit is working.

Identifying these women and encouraging increased uptake in the service will improve the health of both mothers and the developing fetus, reduce complications

during pregnancy, reduce admissions to NICU and will have lifelong benefits for the child's development. The good news is that stopping smoking has immediate benefits for both mother and baby.

This joint Tobacco Free Ireland and Sláintecare project will involve all the staff in the outpatient and antenatal section of CUMH.

## **2) What has been your career to date, and what attracted you to this job?**

I have been a midwife for 22 years. I initially trained as a nurse in St. Vincent's Hospital, Dublin. I worked there as a staff nurse before moving to the Bons Secours Hospital in Cork. In 1997, I started my midwifery training in the Erinville and St Finbarr's and worked in the delivery suite in the Erinville until we moved to CUMH.

I have been working in the antenatal clinic for the last 8 years looking after women during pregnancy in the midwifery led clinics, while also providing health promotional advice and education. I am very passionate about the welfare and health of mothers and babies during pregnancy because, as I mentioned before, health in pregnancy has lifelong implications for the child. My interest in smoking in pregnancy has led me to complete the Health Protection Post Graduate in UCC last year and in August this year, I commenced the Masters in Public Health, which I feel will compliment my focus in smoking cessation in pregnancy.

### 3) Why do we need to be doing all we can to support women and their families to stop smoking?

Tobacco use in pregnancy increases the occurrence of placental complications resulting in increased maternal mortality and morbidity. Its major affect is on fetal growth; studies following the smoking ban in Ireland concluded there was an immediate and substantial reduction in small-for-gestational-age births. It is also associated with premature delivery, another affect that requires admission to the Neonatal ICU. It is linked to stillbirth, sudden infant death syndrome and is a neurotoxic agent that causes behavioural problems in the child.

So it's clearly important to support women and their families to quit smoking as it has serious health consequences for both mother and fetus during pregnancy and has lifelong implications for the health of all the family.

Most women want to stop smoking when they are pregnant but many come from a culture of smokers that makes it challenging for them in the home environment. Many of these women are also struggling with mental health issues and use their smoking dependency as a crutch and they struggle to break the habit. The healthcare professional needs to recognise the role and opportunity that they have, to raise the issue of lifestyle behaviour change.

We also need to recognise that even if women want to stop smoking they may not succeed on their first attempt and that they are supported to retry.

### 4) Due to the stigma associated with smoking and pregnancy, does this prevent women from seeking support?

It probably does prevent women from seeking support, as most women already know that it is not

recommended to smoke during pregnancy and often feel guilty about it. Therefore, it is important to ASK can we talk about their smoking habit, ADVISE on the need for behavioural change, ASSESS readiness to change, ASSIST with exploring barriers and how to overcome them, ARRANGE appropriate referrals. It is important to deliver the service in a non-judgemental manner so that if the woman relapses, she feels she can reconnect with you and will be supported to try again.

### 5) Are you happy with how the National Maternity Strategy has covered smoking cessation?

The National Maternity Strategy has made three key recommendations for smoking cessation in pregnancy.

- 1) Maternity hospitals should be smoke free
- 2) An onsite smoking cessation service is recommended
- 3) Midwives and other healthcare professional should have formal and documented training in smoking cessation

These recommendations were made in 2016 and even though it has taken four years to roll out the recommendations, it is a very welcome progression and will improve the health of mothers and babies. More supports need to be put in place to optimise the benefit of the strategy. CUMH and The National Maternity Hospital are the two hospitals involved in the current project for an onsite midwife smoking cessation specialist, but there are also other projects that are running in different areas around the country. The provision of these services will hopefully make a difference to the welfare of woman and infants.

### 6) What are your plans for the role for the next year?

Until now, the area Health Promotion officer has provided a smoking cessation service in CUMH and this was only part of her job. Going forward I plan to

build on this as I will be permanently based in CUMH. My plan involves training all staff in the Making Every Contact Count brief intervention programme, to ensure support for pregnant women at every encounter with healthcare professionals. I will be available to women attending the hospital to provide support and I will be setting up my own clinic where I will be able to encourage and support women in their quit attempt. Hopefully the results of the new service will be reflected in decreased admissions to NICU and improved health of our mothers and babies. I would love for mothers to feel empowered so that they don't relapse following the birth of their baby, as growing up in a smoke free environment is essential for the health of a family.

### 7) Would you like to see a smoking cessation service across Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate?

A smoking cessation service across Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate would be ideal. As it would support more pregnant women, not just the women attending CUMH. Currently there is a Sláintecare funded programme in the South East that is supporting women who are attending maternity units in general hospitals. Hopefully this will also be extended to the rest of the country.



## Special Care Baby Unit, UHK welcomes four Neonatal Nurses to Kerry

By Mary O'Connor, Specialist Co-ordinator Midwifery, KCNME, UHK



Pictured in Kerry Centre of Nurse and Midwifery Education, UHK: Aiswarya Augustine, RGN; Remya Joseph, RGN; Mary O'Connor, Specialist Co-Ordinator Midwifery; Sony Mariam Jibi, RGN; Sandya Surendran, RGN

University Hospital Kerry Special Baby Care Unit (SCBU) welcomes four neonatal nurses to the team. Aiswarya Augustine, Remya Joseph, Sony Mariam Jibi, and Sandya Surendran originally from India, have many years experience of working in Level 3 (tertiary) Neonatal units in Dubai and Saudi Arabia.

Aiswarya, Remya, Sony and Sandya have had a busy number of weeks since arriving into Ireland in February 2020. Firstly, they successfully undertook the RCSI overseas aptitude assessment, which allowed them to register with the Nursing and Midwifery Board Ireland (NMBI).

To assist Aiswarya, Remya Sony and Sandya adapt to working within the SCBU in UHK, a competency-based orientation programme was designed. This incorporated a two-week classroom educational programme. Educational workshops were facilitated by the multidisciplinary team in UHK including Susan Buckley, RGN; Mary Godley, RGN; Carrie Dillon, Bereavement Support; Karen Lovett, CNS children with life limiting conditions; Nora Hunt, Haemovigilance Officer; Emma Flaherty, Senior Pharmacist, UHK; Marie Nolan, CNS, Diabetes; Mary O'Regan, RNT; Anny Varghese, RNT; Christine Barry, CNS Infection Control; Mairead O'Sullivan, RGN; Joanne Evans, HR; Grainne Rohan, Practice Development; Dr Khan, Consultant Paediatrician; Dr Daniel Onyekwere, Consultant Paediatrician; Mary O'Connor, Specialist Coordinator, Midwifery and Lucille Bradfield, CMM2, Neonatal Unit CUMH.

The four nurses are currently working through the Competency Based Orientation Clinical Skills Log supported by their assigned mentor. In collaboration with CUMH, a one-week clinical placement was organised as part of the competency-based orientation programme. However, due to the unprecedented global pandemic of COVID-19, this was postponed. We are delighted to welcome Aiswarya, Remya, Sony and Sandya to the team in UHK. The Kerry Centre of Nurse and Midwifery Education wish to thank the entire multidisciplinary team in the UHK and CUMH for their expertise and support with the competency-based orientation.

## Welcoming New Doctors to CUMH in 2020

The tradition of a welcome breakfast on the 5th floor corridor of Cork University Maternity Hospital (CUMH) returned again in July 2020 to mark the new non-consultant hospital doctors (NCHDs) joining CUMH. However, this time around, it was arranged with social distancing in mind due to COVID-19.

As a result, there were two sittings for breakfast and the fine spread was well spaced out on a long table that stretched along the long glass corridors on the top floor.

Professor John R. Higgins, Clinical Director Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate welcomed the new team alongside Katie Bourke, Director of Midwifery and Miriam Lyons, Head of Operations, Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate. John said: "We're always delighted to welcome our new team of NCHDs to Cork University Maternity Hospital. We look forward to working with them alongside our multidisciplinary team in the provision of care to the women and infants of our region."

The group photo that is usually taken following the breakfast, has been postponed for the moment.



# World Breastfeeding Week 2020 in UHK: 1 – 7 August

## INFORM, ANCHOR, ENGAGE, GALVANISE

By Mairead O’Sullivan A/CNM2, Infant Feeding Coordinator, UHK

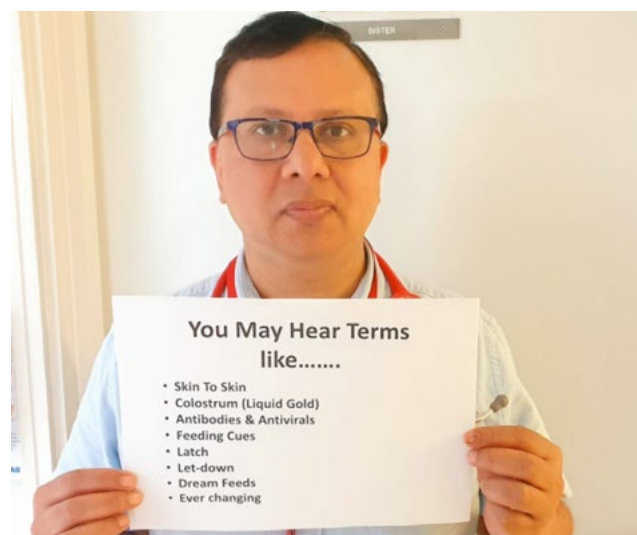
Staff in University Hospital Kerry, celebrated World Breastfeeding Week in a multitude of ways.

In July 2020, I was delighted to be appointed into role of A/CNM2 Infant Feeding Coordinator for UHK Maternity Services providing additional specialist support to staff and women on their infant feeding journeys.

Antenatal breastfeeding preparation classes recommenced after being paused due to COVID-19 earlier in the year, with classes facilitated by myself weekly throughout July and August in IT Tralee. The re-introduction of these classes has been received well by all service users booked to deliver in UHK, complementing the existing online video classes produced during COVID-19. During World Breastfeeding Week an extra antenatal class was held along with extra postnatal breastfeeding discharge classes held daily on the postnatal

ward. The maternity services area was decorated with posters from this year’s themed World Breastfeeding Week. The week was also celebrated with staff and patients enjoying some cupcakes specially arranged for #WBW2020.

Extra staff education sessions were also arranged with Mary O’Connor, CNME and myself co-facilitating an in-house, six-hour breastfeeding study day during that week for midwifery and nursing staff. I was also delighted to coordinate the production of a specially designed video, highlighting key facts and information on breastfeeding made available to all service users. This was displayed in the hospital main foyer throughout the week and also released on all UHK hospital social media platforms. Multi-disciplinary staff from all areas of maternity services were included in this virtual support celebration of World Breastfeeding Week.





## Joint Chief Residents handover to the new Chief Resident for Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate



*Pictured left: Dr Aoife Morris, Dr David Crosby, Professor John R. Higgins, Clinical Director Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate; Katie Bourke, Director of Midwifery, CUMH and Miriam Lyons, Head of Operations, Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate. (Note photo was taken before the wearing of masks was made mandatory)*

The outgoing joint Chief Residents Dr David Crosby and Dr Aoife Morris were appointed in the Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate in July 2019. The Chief Resident role was established in 2018 and acts as a lead for the NCHDs (Non-Consultant Hospital Doctors), overseeing the roster system and representing colleagues over the course of the year.

Dr Crosby departed Cork University Maternity Hospital (CUMH) prematurely on 29 May 2020 to embark upon a fellowship in reproductive genetics in New York Presbyterian Hospital, Columbia

University. We wish him the best of luck in this endeavour. We're delighted that Dr Aoife Morris is staying in CUMH. Dr Morris started as a Locum Consultant in CUMH in August of this year.

Before Dr Crosby's departure, they were both presented with some tokens of appreciation from the CUMH leadership team. Professor John R. Higgins, Clinical Director Ireland South, Katie Bourke, Director of Midwifery, CUMH and Miriam Lyons, Head of Operations, Ireland South thanked them for their hard work and acknowledged their dedication as Chief Residents.



Dr Alison DeMaio took on the role of Chief Resident this summer and will now oversee the NCHDs as they adjust to the resumption of services and tackle the backlog built up since clinics and theatre lists were paused for the COVID-19 pandemic. Dr DeMaio previously graduated from the Royal College of Surgeons in Dublin in 2012. She is originally from Kentucky and has been in Ireland for 12 years. She is in her final year as SpR for Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

# Apple: Babysteps Appeal for CUMH Neonatal Sanctum



We are delighted to announce that Apple in Cork have signed up to do an internal fundraiser in support of the Neonatal Family Sanctum appeal for mothers, babies and families at CUMH (Cork University Maternity Hospital).

The Neonatal Sanctum Appeal aims to build a multifaceted family sanctum in the courtyard of CUMH to benefit mothers, babies and their families going through stressful times due to ill or premature babies. It will feature a private parent's room as well as the sanctum itself, a dedicated space within the central garden of CUMH for parents to take a baby in palliative care. These private places allow for parents to take some time out, away from, yet close to, the busy clinical critical care environment.

Compassionate places like this are important for mental health and wellbeing and are a tangible demonstration that care and compassion for newborns and their families are at the core of the service provided by CUMH.

Staff at Apple signed up to support the appeal during their Inclusion and Diversity (I&D) week at the start of September. Professor John R. Higgins, Clinical Director of CUMH, spoke at an event at the Apple campus in Cork and took part in the I&D conversation on the 'Power of Giving' to help bring the story to life. The talk also included Dr Liam Healy and Dr Des Murphy from CUH and Michael Nason, CEO CUH Charity. The conversation was broadcast live to other Apple locations around the world and was also recorded so that colleagues who have missed the live event can view it at a later date.

Hundreds of Apple employees have already signed up to raise funds by running, walking or cycling for 30 minutes each day for 30 days in September. Donors to this fundraising initiative will know their money will go to a tangible project that provides a compassionate setting to benefit newborns and their families for decades to come.

Rosemary Mc Sweeney,  
External Relations Manager at Apple said:

*"The collaboration between Apple and CUH and CUMH has really demonstrated the true 'Power of Giving' and how we can make a difference in entire communities, truly leaving the world better than we found it."*

Professor John R. Higgins,  
Clinical Director, CUMH said:

*"Separate, private places such as a Neonatal Family Sanctum are so important for parents going through stressful times and clearly demonstrate that care of newborns and their families is at the very core of the service provided by Cork University Maternity Hospital. We welcome support from the employees of Apple to help bring this project to fruition."*

The image shows two screenshots from a Zoom meeting. The left screenshot displays the meeting title "Inclusion & Diversity Week 2020" and the topic "The Power of Giving" by Rosemary McSweeney and Rachel Cox. It also lists other participants: Dr Emer Ahern, Breda Doyle, Dr Des Murphy, Dr Liam Healy, Prof. John Higgins & Michael Nason. The right screenshot shows the "Baby Steps Appeal for CUMH NeoNatal" event details, including a QR code and instructions for the fundraiser.

# IRELAND SOUTH GRAND ROUNDS: EARLY BIRD DATE FOR 2020

For the new academic year, Grand Rounds will start on Friday, 11 September 2020. Having looked at all options, **Friday at 07:30 – 08:15** is the most suitable time, given availability in all maternity units.

As before, presentations take place in the main auditorium in Cork University Hospital with the audience in the room respecting social distancing requirements and wearing face coverings.

Over the coming months, the maternity units of UHK, UHW and STGH will also take turns to present interesting cases and pioneering research, directly from their location.

All clinical staff are encouraged to make time to attend to keep up-to-date with the latest research and evolving areas of clinical practice.



**Pictured above:** The first Grand Rounds of the 2020 / 2021 academic year on 11 September 2020 in CUH Auditorium

Team Wednesday are scheduled to facilitate the first session followed by Midwifery on Friday 18 September. See below for current schedule until the end of 2020.

DATE	PRESENTING TEAM / TOPIC
11/09/2020	Team Wednesday
18/09/2020	Midwifery
25/09/2020	Team Thursday
02/10/2020	UHK
09/10/2020	STGH
16/10/2020	Bleeding Disorder Education
23/10/2020	Health and Social Care Professionals
30/10/2020	Team Monday
06/11/2020	Neonatology
13/11/2020	UHW
20/11/2020	Team Tuesday
27/11/2020	NPEC
04/12/2020	Hospital and Hospital Group Statistics
11/12/2020	Team Wednesday
18/12/2020	Midwifery

A reminder: the format for Ground Rounds is as follows:

- Short presentation on a topic (20 minutes)
- Critical appraisal of a journal/research article (10 minutes)
- Discussion on a key visual for learning purposes (5 minutes)

Queries in relation to Grand Rounds can be directed to Ruth Devenney, Postgraduate Coordinator in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology on [ruth.devenney@ucc.ie](mailto:ruth.devenney@ucc.ie)



## In Safe Hands: Moving and Handling Programme in the CME

by **Cathy O'Sullivan, Interim Director, Centre of Midwifery Education, CUMH**

Fionnuala Hunt and Áine Blake have extended their teaching roles as Midwife Specialist Coordinators in the Centre of Midwifery Education (CME), in Cork University Maternity Hospital. They recently qualified with distinction grades in the Moving and Handling Instructor Course, under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Act Regulation 2007. They hope to bring their new skills forward to facilitate the Moving and Handling Programme in the CME.

# HSE sponsorship for Higher Diploma in Midwifery 2020

By Fiona Kirby, Midwifery Practice Development Co-ordinator, CUMH



Midwifery recruitment is an ongoing key challenge for Cork University Maternity Hospital, like many other maternity hospitals in Ireland and abroad. While the reality of the Irish Health Service is an increasingly busy service with fewer staff to deliver it, midwifery remains a unique and rewarding profession.

Encouraging nurses into the profession is a tried and tested strategy that works. Indeed many of my colleagues were nurses in a previous life. This year I was delighted to be involved in the midwife recruitment working group involving representatives from a number of universities, hospital sites and HBS Recruitment to take this initiative forward.

One of the key methods used in the recruitment campaign to attract nurses into the profession is the HSE sponsorship for the Higher Diploma in Midwifery. There are four sponsorship areas for training within the HSE sites and course commencement dates are as follows:

UL 25/01/2021  
UCC 08/03/2021  
NUIG 01/03/2021  
DKIT 08/03/2021

The closing date for applications was on 7 August 2020. The reason for this date in 2020 is to ensure there's enough time to check that candidates fulfil the eligibility criteria before the course commences in 2021. This includes the requirement for candidates to be a registered nurse and have a minimum of six months experience within the past three years (full details are on the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland website: [www.nmbi.ie/Careers-in-Nursing-Midwifery](http://www.nmbi.ie/Careers-in-Nursing-Midwifery)).

This year, the recruitment campaign focused on three key elements:

1. Information leaflet
2. Digital marketing campaign
3. HBS Recruitment

1) **Information leaflet:** I was delighted to work on a campaign leaflet with Margaret Quigley, National Lead for Midwifery, ONMSD. This featured the 18 month Higher Diploma in Midwifery HSE Sponsorship and is targeted at registered general nurses. Copies were sent to the Midwifery Practice Development Co-ordinators in each maternity unit in Ireland South for distribution locally. The leaflet is also available for download from the HSE and ONMSD websites to give updated information on the Higher Diploma in Midwifery Sponsorship programme.

2) **Digital marketing campaign:** A digital marketing campaign was also designed to target potential candidates via Facebook, Instagram and Linked-In. Sponsorship was agreed by the Office of the Nursing and Midwifery Services Director (ONMSD: <https://healthservice.hse.ie/about-us/onmsd/cpd-for-nurses-and-midwives/onmsd-sponsorship-schemes/>).

Up to 17 July 2020, the stats were as follows:

- 54,985 - People reached
- 904 - Landing page views on this link
- 283 - Reactions (likes, comments, shares)
- 110 - Comments
- 132 - Shares

85 applications have been received to date for the programme for the four sites.

3) **HBS Recruitment:** HBS Recruitment reviewed all candidates against the eligibility criteria and are currently involved in planning for interviews.

To date, feedback has been given to all four maternity hospitals (CUMH, Limerick, Galway and Drogheda) and from associated universities over the summer months.

In my opinion, the campaign was a great opportunity to get midwife recruitment and sponsorship for the Higher Diploma advertised digitally, especially in view of the restrictions this year. The success of using digital marketing was of huge benefit in getting the word out there and will be taken on board for future campaigns. It is also great to have a national information leaflet finalised for future campaigns.

The next steps include the interview process. I look forward to meeting and working with the next intake of Higher Diploma student midwives.

I would like to thank Katie Bourke (Director of Midwifery, CUMH), Margaret Quigley (National lead for Midwifery, ONMSD), Ina Crowley (Project Officer, lead for the PHN Sponsorship Programme) and the working group involved in the Higher Diploma Sponsorship programme.

## UCC Medical Students return to hospital and maternity units in Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate

By the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Administration Team

For the first time since March of this year, UCC medical students returned for clinical placement to our maternity hospital and units around the Directorate on Monday 7 September. Fourth and final-year medical students will be finding their feet again, as they gain experience of obstetrics and gynaecology through small group teaching in clinical areas and online lectures.

### Safety measures

Additional specific guidance has been developed by UCC and the HSE to ensure the safety of students, staff and patients in light of the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Before commencing placement, all students will have completed a mandatory COVID-19 module, including a practical hand hygiene session
- While on placement, students are required to report daily on a UCC app whether they are well/ have possible symptoms of COVID/ have been diagnosed with COVID-19/ are a contact of a known case
- Students will not attend placement if they are unwell or have been advised to self-isolate or restrict their movements
- Students will only attend the hospital for their allocated clinical placement time
- Purple scrubs have been provided by the School of Medicine, making the students easily identifiable while they are on site

### New frontiers

Consultants, NCHDs, GPs and the wider teaching staff have embarked on new technological frontiers, adjusting

their teaching to online formats whether pre-recorded or live lectures and tutorials. Students can join in and engage in class discussions from the safety of their home.

The technology and connectivity capabilities will be in high demand on each site and the patience and good humour of all students and staff will be vital! Where possible, small group teaching will take place when social distancing allows.

### Student Clinical Placement Details: CUMH

A clinical attachment schedule has been formulated for students attending CUMH for their attachment. The attachment schedule encompasses all clinical aspects and is evenly divided among both fourth and final-year medical students in order to adhere to social distancing.

The schedule has been divided into four weeks encompassing a week each in clinics, gynaecology theatre, labour ward, emergency room and wards. With safety in mind, students will rotate through each week and will only interact with those students assigned to their week.

We thank you for your cooperation as students progress through their rotations and hope you can welcome them and share your knowledge of caring for the women and babies in our communities. You are part of a university teaching hospital and we are all part of the one team! As our Directorate tagline says: **Together with women, babies and families, our academic healthcare network strives for clinical excellence and innovation.**



**Top photo:** Fourth-year students receiving a lecture on obstetrics and gynaecology by Clinical Tutor, Dr Naureen Yasir, Dept. of Obstetrics and Gynaecology. **Centre photo:** Dr Naureen Yasir, Clinical Tutor using MS Teams to teach virtually. **Above:** Dr Rebecca Cole, Clinical Tutor teaching students via MS Teams

# SATU Study Day: 9 October 2020

Please note that the Sexual Assault Treatment Unit's (SATU) annual Intra Agency Study Day shall be held on **9 October 2020**. This event will be hosted by Mullingar Sexual Assault Treatment Unit. Given the restrictions posed by COVID-19, this year the event will take place online via webinar. Details will be shared in the near future by your maternity unit.

There are six Sexual Assault Treatment Units (SATUs) in Ireland. They provide specialist care for women and men aged fourteen years and over who have recently been sexually assaulted or raped. The specialist team of SATU staff provide easily accessible, holistic services which address the medical, psychological and emotional needs and appropriate follow up care for victims of sexual crime, in a supportive, sensitive manner. This includes provision of treatment such as emergency contraception and medication to reduce the possibility of developing sexually transmitted infection.

The SATU services respond to requests from the Gardaí for the collection of forensic evidence to aid the legal process and also provide services for people who do not wish to report the incident to the Gardaí. There is no charge for any of the SATU services or follow up appointments. SATU services can be contacted at any time via An Garda Síochána, or by contacting the individual SATU.



## Ireland South patient survey regarding visiting restrictions coming soon

A survey of mothers who gave birth in all four hospitals/units in Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate during the COVID-19 pandemic will be issued in the coming months.

The aim of the study is to get a general understanding of the impact of the visiting restrictions on the experience of women having a baby during COVID-19, including visiting the hospital for appointments or scans without their partner and being on the postnatal ward without their partner visiting. (Note partners can attend the hospital when the patient is in established labour or called for caesarean section and can stay for a short time after the birth.)

The survey will also illustrate whether there is a difference between women's experiences based on whether it is their first baby or not and the length of their stay after the birth.

In addition, the survey seeks to understand what was the most difficult part of the visitor restrictions. For example, attending ultrasound scans or being on the postnatal ward without a partner present.

The purpose of the study is to share findings within Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate as well as all other maternity hospitals as regards the impact of visiting restrictions on the patient experience, which may contribute to future decision making and research.

To avoid surveying mothers who may have suffered significant trauma, only mothers who gave birth to babies >500g either vaginally or by C-Section will be included. Mothers whose babies were admitted to the Neonatal Unit or who suffered a bereavement/loss will be excluded from the survey.



# SATU 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

The National Sexual Assault Treatment Unit Services 2019 annual report shows that almost 1,000 people attended the six units around the country, including 180 patients aged under 18. In each unit, a specialist team of SATU staff provide easily accessible, holistic services which address the medical, psychological and emotional needs and appropriate follow up care for victims of sexual crime, in a supportive, sensitive manner.

The units - located in Dublin, Cork (South Infirmiry Victoria University Hospital), Waterford (University Hospital Waterford), Mullingar, Galway and Letterkenny - provided care for 943 people who disclosed rape or sexual assault, with another 20 people cared for in the out-of-hours service at University Hospital Limerick. It represents a very slight increase on the overall figure for 2018, but is also the fifth consecutive annual rise in SATU presentations.

The biggest number of presentations, 393, were at the Rotunda Hospital SATU, with the second highest, 144, at the South Infirmiry Victoria University Hospital in Cork. According to the report, almost a quarter of incidents last year place in Dublin.

It also found: “62% of 1084 perpetrators were described as ‘stranger’ or ‘recent acquaintance’, 17% as ‘friend’ or ‘family member’ while 9% were described as an intimate (or ex-intimate) partner”.

Earlier this year the national director of Ireland’s sexual assault treatment units, Dr Maeve Eogan, said the lockdown restrictions imposed due to COVID-19

had dispelled myths around rape, with presentations to units continuing despite pubs, clubs and other social spaces being closed.

The annual report is available on [www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/5/sexhealth/sexual-assault-treatment-units-resources-for-healthcare-professionals/](http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/5/sexhealth/sexual-assault-treatment-units-resources-for-healthcare-professionals/)

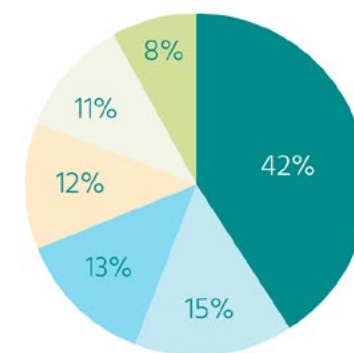
## Attendance in each SATU 2019

SATU Locations 2019



There were **943 attendees** at the **6 SATUs** in the republic of Ireland in 2019, an **increase of 2 attendees** from 2018 (when **941 patients** attended)

**823 (87%)** of incidents occurred in the Republic of Ireland with the **greatest number of incidents occurring in Dublin (23%)**



393	Rotunda Hospital Dublin
144	South Infirmiry Victoria University Hospital Cork
122	Midlands Regional Hospital Mullingar
110	Donegal SATU
102	Galway SATU
72	University Hospital Waterford

# ROI COVID-19 Study

by Edel Manning, NPEC Project Manager: Perinatal Mortality Audit and Severe Maternal Morbidity Audit

The National Perinatal Epidemiology Centre (NPEC) in collaboration with the National Women and Infants Health Programme (NWIHP) and the National Clinical Programme for Paediatrics and Neonatology (NCPN) are creating a register of all pregnant women and newborns, before 29 days of age, who have been tested for the COVID-19 virus.

Commenced on 1 March 2020, this register has facilitated a surveillance of testing practices within maternity units and an indication of the prevalence of pregnant women and neonates testing positive for the COVID-19 virus. We thank all maternity units for your ongoing support in maintaining this register over the coming months. We will be providing reports every three months to units that will build on the register data collected and national reports will be available on the NPEC web site at: [www.ucc.ie/en/npec/roiCOVID-19study/](http://www.ucc.ie/en/npec/roiCOVID-19study/)

For those pregnant women and newborns who tested positive for SARS-CoV-2, a retrospective audit will be conducted to capture the epidemiological and clinical characteristics of COVID-19 and outcomes. The aim of the audit is to inform clinical practice, families and public health authorities on the impact of COVID-19 infection in pregnant women and neonates, and to evaluate the influence of treatment and care management on pregnancy outcomes. This will provide valuable national data to inform practice at a time when the impact of COVID-19 in pregnancy is not clearly understood. Please note the NPEC team are working remotely as per HSE guidelines. All audits are continuing. Should you have a query in relation to any audit/research project please contact [npec@ucc.ie](mailto:npec@ucc.ie)



NATIONAL PERINATAL  
EPIDEMIOLOGY CENTRE



National  
Women & Infants  
Health Programme



Clinical Design  
& Innovation  
Person-centred, co-ordinated care

## Fiona Kirby, Midwifery Practice Development Co-ordinator, CUMH



My name is Fiona and earlier this year, I was appointed as the Midwifery Practice Development Coordinator in Cork University Maternity Hospital (CUMH). I have worked with the Practice Development Team within CUMH for the past twelve years as the Postgraduate Clinical Coordinator. I recently completed my Masters in Clinical Education, where I reviewed students and preceptors experience in giving and receiving feedback and the impact this has on the clinical learning environment. This aligns well with the philosophy of the Midwifery Practice Development Team, which is to foster a culture of learning and support for students and qualified midwives/nurses to be competent, skilled and professional members of the multidisciplinary team, who can provide exemplary midwifery/nursing care.

In collaboration with the Practice Development Team, Senior Management Team, Clinical Midwife/Nurse Managers and UCC, I ensure that the clinical environments provided for students are capable of meeting their required learning objectives, thereby safeguarding midwifery for the future.

Along with Clinical Skills Facilitators on the team, I support staff with orientation, transition to qualification and new initiatives.

Delivery of safe and effective maternity care within Ireland South Women and Infants Directorate is a key aim. Practice Development is essentially about questioning and assessing practice through audit and review.

A key role of the Practice Development Team is developing, disseminating and implementing new policies for which I am excited to be the Co-Chair on the Ireland South PPG Committee. I sit on other committees too, as relevant to my work in Practice Development. As Midwifery Development Coordinator, I am delighted to lead such a hard-working team and look forward to what the future holds.



# HRB Funding awarded for study ‘Practice Enhancement for Exclusive Breastfeeding (PEEB)’

By Dr Patricia Leahy-Warren (Senior Lecturer, UCC)

The School of Nursing & Midwifery Research Group *Maternity, Families and Primary Care* has been awarded a 2020 HRB Applied Partnership Award (€240,000). The Applied Partnership Awards are designed to bring knowledge users (clinicians) and academic researchers together to develop research projects that address a specific need within the Irish health or social care system. The project addresses a specific need within the Irish healthcare and social care system/service.

The initiative is Practice Enhancement for Exclusive Breastfeeding (PEEB) across the pregnant woman’s perinatal journey from first confirmation of pregnancy with GP practice, through the maternity services for antenatal, intranatal and postnatal care and seamless transition to the community and will include public health nursing, GPs and practice nurse services, maternity services and breastfeeding mothers.

**Lead Researcher:** Academic Lead is Dr Patricia Leahy-Warren (Senior Lecturer, UCC) and Clinical Lead is Ms Sandra O’Connor (Director of Midwifery, UHK).

**Team:** From UCC: Dr H Mulcahy; Dr E. Lehane; Dr R. O’Connell; Dr M. Murphy;

Ms R. Bradley; Professor C. Bradley; UHK: Ms O. Paul; Dr P Hughes; Dr A. Khan. From HSE: Professor B. O’Sullivan; Ms A. Walsh, Dr E Heffernan; Dr C. Buckley; GP Practice: Dr E. Johnson; Public Health Nursing: Ms H. Sweeney; PPI; Ms M. O’Leary; International Expert: Professor V. Schmied.

[www.ucc.ie/en/nursingmidwifery/research/maternityfamiliesandprimarycare/](http://www.ucc.ie/en/nursingmidwifery/research/maternityfamiliesandprimarycare/)

The aim of this partnership project is to enhance the implementation of evidence-based practice for exclusive breastfeeding throughout the pregnant woman’s journey until 3 months postpartum. A multi-pronged approach will be taken to achieve a service where women who choose to exclusively breastfeed feel supported. Such an approach will involve an identification of current practice, training of professionals, facilitation of the transition to enhanced practices and the modification of healthcare environments in line with evidence.

Research findings will have a direct impact on decision-making and will have a significant impact on the health and well-being of women, their infants and families.



Pictured above: Academic Lead, Dr Patricia Leahy-Warren, Senior Lecturer, UCC



Pictured above: Clinical Lead, Ms Sandra O’Connor, Director of Midwifery, UHK

## Midwife Research Impacting Care

### PHD Research by Colette Cunningham, Senior Neonatal Intensive Care Nurse, UHW

My name is Colette Cunningham and I am a Senior Neonatal Intensive Care Nurse in UHW and a PhD Scholar in the RCSI, Dublin. In 2018, I completed my MSc in NICU Nursing in the RCSI. During this time, I successfully published a systematic review with the Journal of Neonatal Nursing titled 'Does kangaroo care affect the weight of preterm/low birth-weight infants in the neonatal setting of a hospital environment?'. This research sparked a passion in me to advocate kangaroo/skin-to-skin care as a primary standard of care in my clinical practice, and also spurred me on to investigate it further in the form of a PhD.

In September 2019, I competed for and was awarded with a full-time employment based PhD Scholarship from the Irish Research Council in conjunction with the RCSI, worth 96,000



euros! My PhD research is titled 'An eHealth educational intervention to improve kangaroo knowledge and support the self-efficacy of neonatal nurses'. The study is quasi-experimental with a pre-test/post-test design. I have received full ethical approval from the South East ethical committee for all phases of the research over the next two years. It will take place across four hospital neonatal units in the South East and involves three phases. Phase one will include a pre-intervention questionnaire pack, to include kangaroo care knowledge, confidence, self-efficacy and locus of control questionnaires. Once data has been collected and analysed, phase two will begin. This involves the launch of an eHealth educational intervention for neonatal nurses. Once the sample of nurses have used the educational intervention, phase three will begin. This will include the same questionnaire pack as in phase one, being offered for completion again. Results of data collection will inform me whether the eHealth intervention has had an effect or not.

The aim of this PhD research is to ultimately enhance kangaroo care knowledge amongst neonatal nurses and support their self-efficacy in its provision. This should then allow the provision of it to become a basic primary standard of care, thus improving long-term physiological and neurological outcomes for the ill, term and preterm neonatal infants in our services.

**Pictured left:** Colette Cunningham, Senior Neonatal Intensive Care Nurse, UHW at RCSI Nursing and Midwifery Conference in Dublin in February 2020

### MSc Research by Maggie Dowling, Midwife Shift Leader, STGH



My name is Maggie Dowling and I am currently working in South Tipperary General Hospital (STGH) maternity services, as a Midwife Shift Leader.

I recently completed my Masters in Midwifery in UCC and my thesis focused on antenatal anxiety. I was prompted to focus on antenatal anxiety, as at ward level, I had noticed a large number of women presenting with anxiety. Pregnancy is a complex, short lived situation which can have long lasting effects on mother and baby. Anxiety can be overwhelming and debilitating and somatic symptoms such as nausea, pain and heartburn can prevail. Despite women's mental health affecting the family, stigma remains a problem. However, reducing anxiety levels will improve fetal and maternal outcomes.

During my Masters, I applied for permission to access the survey on women's experiences of maternity care that took place across the Ireland South Women and Infants Directorate in the South / South West Hospital Group in 2017. This survey

aimed to evaluate the satisfaction of women who had attended Cork University Maternity Hospital and the maternity units of University Hospital Kerry, University Hospital Waterford and South Tipperary General Hospital.

1229 women completed the survey related to antenatal and postnatal care. Although, 11.5% of women self-reported anxiety, the majority did not. In addition, the survey highlighted that the majority of women were asked about their mental health by their GP and hospital doctor, but only a small number of women were asked by their practice nurse. The survey highlighted the need for a dedicated pathway, which is thankfully in place in STGH with a Perinatal Mental Health Specialist in post. Simply, a chance encounter with a healthcare professional is no longer suitable. A screening tool allows for help in identifying anxiety and thus allows for an intervention to be put in place. Supporting women empowers them, involves them in their care and provides them with choices regarding their mental health. After all, the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) regards midwives to be the most suitable care givers during all stages of pregnancy!



# CUMH wins national award for its work in reducing gynaecology waiting lists

By Gráinne O’Connell, Project Manager, UCC Academy

Cork University Maternity Hospital (CUMH) and Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate are delighted to have won a HSE Service Excellence Award for cutting our gynaecology outpatient waiting list by 75 per cent.

gynaecology services at CUMH (and other hospitals across the country) and overall increasing trends in gynaecology waiting lists.



In less than three years, CUMH transformed the waiting list from one of the highest to one of the shortest in the country. In April 2017, the gynaecology waiting list in CUMH stood at 4,700, with 1,900 of those patients waiting over 12 months, and some waiting over three years. A long wait causes significant stress for patients and their families due to the impact on their quality of life. It also affects staff knowing that there’s an increased risk of a patient deteriorating while waiting so long.

This extraordinary result was made possible through the sheer hard work and dedication of the multidisciplinary team at CUMH and the co-operation of patients, along with the support of service suppliers, the South/South West Hospital Group leadership team and the National Women & Infants Health Programme.



By the end of 2019, CUMH had significantly reduced its waiting list number by 75% to 1,200. Only five patients still on the list were waiting over one year and 70% of the 1,200 patients were waiting less than 12 weeks.

The Awards Selection Panel commented that that the initiative resulted in a significant reduction in waiting lists and this along with the online booking system for patients, positively impacted on the patient experience.

The bigger picture showed that at the end of 2019, the CUMH waiting list represented just 4% of patients waiting nationally for outpatient gynaecology services, down from 16% in 2017.

What is notable, is that this reduction was achieved against the backdrop of increasing demand for

Gynaecology Outpatient Waiting List	
April 2017	4,700
December 2018	2,700
<b>March 2020</b>	<b>900</b>

Women on Waiting List over 1 Year	
April 2017	1,900
December 2018	600
<b>March 2020</b>	<b>0</b>

**Pictured top:** Patient Brigit McCarthy from Clonakilty, Professor John R. Higgins, Clinical Director CUMH and Ms Orfhlaith O’Sullivan, Consultant Obstetrician & Gynaecologist. **Picture:** Gerard McCarthy. **Centre:** CUMH Medical Secretaries. **Above left:** CUMH Midwives and Outpatients staff. **Above right:** CUMH Central Appointments Team

# CUMH employing a patient-centred approach even in the face of COVID-19 adversity



Reprinted from an article by Darragh Bermingham for The Echo

In a world where human contact is limited and normal hospital procedures required major changes, staff at Cork University Maternity Hospital (CUMH) worked hard to ensure that people in labour could still savour the magical moments of childbirth, even as the chaos caused by the pandemic raged on.

When the COVID-19 pandemic reached Ireland's shores, hospitals began cancelling activities that were not of the emergency or acute nature. While many elective procedures and appointments were postponed, childbirth was one aspect that could not wait.

Staff at CUMH were quick to adapt to the new normal, erecting tents outside the hospital to check patients' symptoms and temperature

before entry, and becoming adept at donning personal protective equipment for labour. Sadbh Creed, a nurse at Cork University Maternity Hospital (CUMH), explained that once the pandemic arrived in Ireland, healthcare staff became "aware of the added threat and danger in work".

"We were dealing with this added stress at both work and home, and we were trying to make sure our patients didn't feel that," she said.

"That's hugely important, especially in the maternity hospital where we are not usually taking care of sick people but people who are experiencing this fantastic moment in their lives and we want to ensure they fully experience it.

"For us, the focus was ensuring people were safe but that they could still experience that little bit of magic even as the world around them was in chaos." Sadbh explained that effective screening processes outside the hospital ensured that not all patients had to be seen in full PPE, but that CUMH staff became adept at using it while still providing quality care to patients.

"CUMH was on top of things quickly," she said.

"Very early on, we started checking people outside the hospital. We had tents outside where people were getting their temperatures

checked - we had the screening processes in place," she added.

"That meant that not everyone was seen in full PPE." In cases where PPE was required, Sadbh admitted it felt "alien" to begin with but that both staff and patients became used to it.

"Usually, we wear protective gowns and things like that but for there to be such a physical barrier between us when it's such a personal form of care was definitely very strange for us," she said.

"What was also particularly difficult for us was seeing those on wards who were not in labour spend a lot of time on their own. When people are critical or in labour, they're surrounded by people but those who weren't critical or weren't in labour spend a lot of time on their own," she added.

"They couldn't have visitors because of the restrictions and we didn't have the staffing to stay with them all the time, so they spend a lot of time bored and lonely. That's very difficult for us because midwifery and nursing is not just about medical care and treatment - it's much more personal than that. We get to know our patients, spend time with them, chat to them - it's one way of being able to tell their condition - we can see if they're improving or deteriorating quicker that way.

"While the PPE didn't stop us caring for patients, it certainly brought it home to patients, particularly at the start, that there is a pandemic out there and I think it might have startled them a little.

"For some people it was frightening and we worked hard to make them feel comfortable and safe." Staff at CUMH have been praised by GPs in Cork in recent months for their patient-centered approach, even in the face of such adversity.

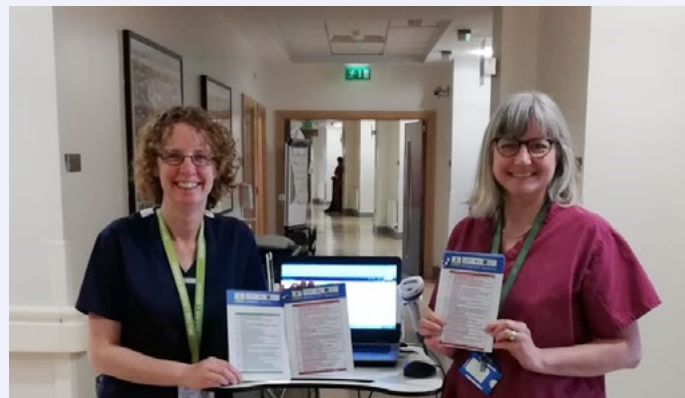
Looking to the future, Sadbh highlighted the need for hospitals to be able to continue offering outpatient and elective appointments as well as screening programmes, even in the event of a possible second wave and busy winter flu season.

Sadbh said staff at CUMH have worked hard to reduce appointment waiting lists.

"We managed the first wave of coronavirus well but lots of other aspects had to be put on hold to enable us to do that," she said. "We need to find that balance between continuing with the normal workings of a hospital and dealing with a possible second coronavirus wave along with a busy winter flu period."

## MN-CMS Documentation Checklists

by Deirdre Moriarty, MN-CMS Training Co-ordinator  
SSWHG and Kate Lyons, Clinical Skills Facilitator



**Above:** Deirdre Moriarty, MN-CMS Training Co-ordinator SSWHG and Kate Lyons, Clinical Skills Facilitator with the new MN-CMS Documentation Checklists

The MN-CMS Department and Practice Development collaborated to create a suite of MN-CMS Documentation Checklists in order to help improve the quality of documentation and subsequent data collection.

They are currently available for the antenatal and postnatal wards, birthing suite and theatre in Cork University Maternity Hospital (CUMH).

The checklists are guides for nurses and midwives to aid documentation in sections of the Electronic Health Record that they are not overtly familiar with.

They have also become an essential tool to help new staff and those returning from a period of leave, until they gain confidence with the system. They assist student midwives in their workflows as they rotate between placements.

They were launched at the end of April 2020 in CUMH and have been very well received.

We are planning phase two, to include Gynaecology, Outpatients, Emergency Room and Pregnancy Loss.

Kate Lyons and Deirdre Moriarty would like to thank Claire O'Halloran, Nilima Pandit, Donna Burtchaell and staff from all the clinical areas for their input while developing these checklists.

### QUOTES FROM STAFF:

Treasa Crowley, Staff Midwife, 3 East  
*"The user friendly, clear design and wording makes this tool effective."*

Mairead Forde, Staff Midwife, 2 East  
*"Extremely user friendly, especially helpful for new staff on ward and staff back from maternity leave."*

Doireann Kelleher, Student Midwife, Year 4  
*"The documentation checklist is very user friendly and a beneficial guide for carrying out midwifery care."*

Eugene Yap, Staff Nurse, Theatre  
*"The Scribe Nurse checklist was very helpful. Having a standard documentation list makes work easier and documentation more comprehensive."*

Olga O'Brien, A/CMM2, Delivery Suite  
*"The documentation checklist has added structure and clarity for antenatal, intrapartum and postnatal care."*

## School of Nursing and Midwifery, UCC Achievement Awards 2020

By Dr Margaret Murphy, Lecturer in Midwifery at the School of Nursing and Midwifery, UCC

UCC's School of Nursing and Midwifery Annual Achievement Awards took place on the International Day of the Nurse, Tuesday, 12 May 2020. This time, the awards ceremony took place online, celebrating the valiant efforts of students who have exhibited excellence in all aspects of university life.

The ceremony was opened by Professor Josephine Hegarty, Head of School. There was a special address by the President of UCC, Professor Patrick O'Shea.

Eleven awards were presented from nominations received for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Student of the Year, Student Leader of the Year, Outstanding Contribution to Student Life, Contribution to Sport, Community Engagement Award, Community Activism Award, Patricia J Power Excellence in Clinical Practice, Keady Clifford Excellence in Children's Nursing, Preceptor of the Year, and Best Clinical and Quality Learning Environment which was won by the Emergency Department, Cork University Hospital.

The awards can be viewed in detail on the UCC website:  
[www.ucc.ie/en/nursingmidwifery/conferences/schoolawards/theachievementawards/achievementawards20/](http://www.ucc.ie/en/nursingmidwifery/conferences/schoolawards/theachievementawards/achievementawards20/)



**Above:** The Emergency Department team at, Cork University Hospital who won Best Clinical and Quality Learning Environment, a new Achievement Award category for 2020

# Pregnancy Loss Tear Drop Admission Card (2 South)

The CUMH admission card for women who are diagnosed with a late pregnancy loss or stillbirth was introduced in 2019. The card was developed to ensure that their hospital admission for medical induction and delivery would be managed respectfully and appropriately. CUMH is a busy maternity hospital and the card is intended to ensure that women who have received a diagnosis of pregnancy loss will be sensitively looked after once they arrive to the hospital, as the card is a delicate and discreet means of identifying their story.

The pregnancy loss admission card has the CUMH pregnancy loss teardrop logo on the front. The 'Teardrop Alert Symbol' was introduced in CUMH in 2009 and its aim has been to improve best practice and communication by alerting hospital staff to a previous perinatal death. Many years later, the staff at CUMH recognise and understand the meaning of the teardrop symbol wherever it is used. Both alert symbols and admission cards were recognised in the 2016 National Standards for Bereavement Care following pregnancy loss and Perinatal Death.

The admission card also has a space for a patient sticker and information such as the date and time of admission to be entered on the back, along with contact details for the hospital. The card is given to parents when their admission plan is arranged following diagnosis of pregnancy loss, and they present this card to ensure prompt, sensitive care is provided by all the staff they meet at this difficult time.

CUMH strives to achieve a sensitive and respectful environment for bereaved parents, at all points of their care in the hospital, including making the admission process straightforward. The card has been of particular use during COVID-19 pandemic, where it has made both the admission process for bereaved parents and subsequent access to the hospital for partners easier.


**FOR DIRECT ADMISSION TO**

**2 SOUTH WARD**

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

TIME \_\_\_\_\_

CUMH 021 - 4920500  
 2 SOUTH WARD 021 - 4920628  
 EMERGENCY ROOM 021 - 4920595  
 FETAL ASSESSMENT UNIT 021 - 4920602






Above: Dr Tim O'Connor at his retirement in CUMH December 2018

## RIP Dr Tim O'Connor

We regret to report that the death has occurred of Dr Tim O'Connor, a former Senior Lecturer of UCC and Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist CUMH and formerly St. Finbarr's Hospital. Tim was a long-standing member of the academic staff and was a wonderful teacher with a dry sense of humour, as well as being an excellent doctor.

After many years of dedicated service in St Finbarr's in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Dr Tim O'Connor retired in December 2018. He set up the Cork Colposcopy service in the 1980s before any national screening programmes were established.

We are indebted to his tireless service over 40 years. May he rest in peace.

Professor John R. Higgins, Clinical Director, Ireland South Women & Infants Directorate said: *"Tim was a great servant of the hospital and university; he contributed hugely to both the clinical and academic development of Obstetrics & Gynaecology. Tim and his wife, Mary, worked over many years in St Finbarr's and he continued to work in colposcopy long after he was retired. He was deeply committed to the advancement of maternity and gynaecology services in the region. Tim will be missed by us all. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam."*

## An Invitation to Remember



### A Service of Remembrance

With Cork University Maternity Hospital

Will be Online

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

From October 15<sup>th</sup> 2020

**We welcome those who have experienced  
Pregnancy or Infant Loss  
to participate during the Service of Remembrance**

We invite you to submit your baby's name and/or a personal message  
under 10 words to  
[CUMHRemembers@gmail.com](mailto:CUMHRemembers@gmail.com)

Your words will be inscribed on paper leaves to be hung on our memorial tree  
during the virtual Service of Remembrance  
#CUMHRemembers



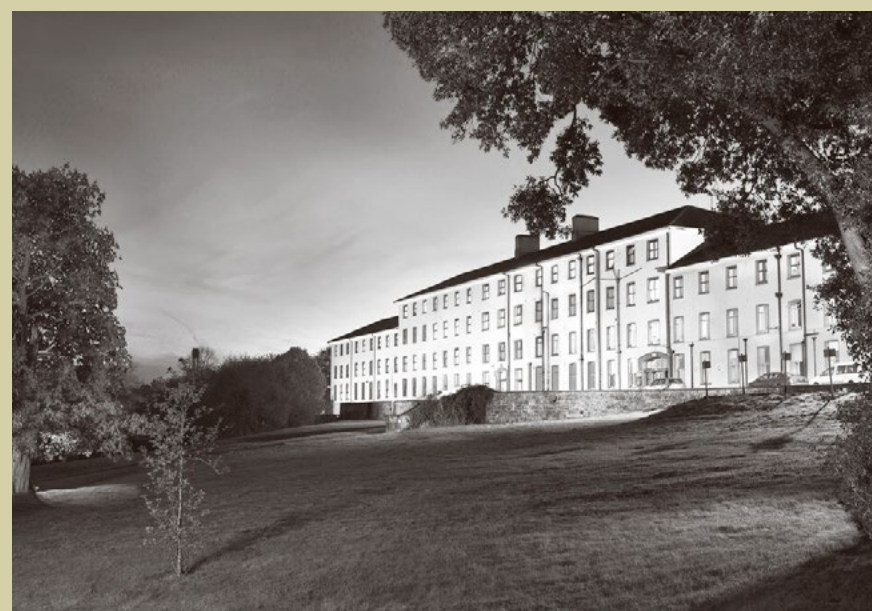
Cork University Maternity Hospital



University Hospital Kerry



University Hospital Waterford



South Tipperary General Hospital

## Have you got a story?

If you have a story for a future issue of **UltraNews** we would love to hear from you!

Please contact **Donna Burtchaell**,  
Communications Project Manager on mobile  
**087 0962567** or email [donna.burtchaell@ucc.ie](mailto:donna.burtchaell@ucc.ie)

Articles for inclusion in the next newsletter must  
be submitted no later than **15 November 2020**