



Portiuncula University Hospital participates in RESIST, a new hand hygiene awareness programme

Portiuncula University Hospital is one of three hospitals nationally to participate in the HSE's Hand Hygiene Train the Trainer and hand hygiene awareness programme (Resist) which is aimed at all healthcare workers and everyone who comes to the hospital.

Resist is a new health service initiative to reduce infection and antimicrobial resistance in health facilities. It will be introduced in hospitals and community services all over the country, backed by the HSE Antimicrobial Resistance and Infection Control programme (AMRIC).

The message for hospital staff is that cleaning your hands properly at the right time is one of the simplest things you can do to save you, your family and your co-workers from becoming ill and reducing the spread of illnesses such as tummy bugs, coughs, colds, and even superbugs.

Commenting James Keane General Manager Portiuncula University Hospital said, "Everyone in Portiuncula University Hospital is committed to reducing the spread of infection. We are delighted to be part of this new HSE awareness programme, Resist which will further highlight the importance of hand hygiene thoroughly to prevent the spread of infection and protect patients, visitors and staff."

Professor Martin Cormican Consultant Microbiologist and HSE National Lead for Antibiotic Resistance added, "Proper hand hygiene is such a critical issue for all of us both at home and in our health services. We are delighted that we are launching our first three sites for the new programme which include Cavan General Hospital, Portiuncula University Hospital and University Hospital Limerick. This hand hygiene awareness programme is an important part of the HSE's work with the Department of Health to progress Ireland's National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance."

Are you washing your hands correctly? Let the staff at Portiuncula University Hospital show you how, [click here](#) to view their video.



Apr 2019 - 30 days

TWEET HIGHLIGHTS

Top Tweet earned 5,427 impressions

Pauline May, Organ Donation Nurse Manager, Saolta Group, reminding us of the importance of organ donation
youtu.be/dHR72vrR71I.
pic.twitter.com/WITx0NWsWZ



Top media Tweet earned 4,637 impressions

Staff members participating in the **#PatientExperience** Fair Day in **#UHG** today. Great engagement highlighting the initiatives to improve our patients journey through our hospitals.
pic.twitter.com/EsVDSNvWrc



May 2019 - 30 days so far...

TWEET HIGHLIGHTS

Top Tweet earned 5,074 impressions

Promoting **#RaiseTheFlag** on **#HeartFailure** in **#UHG** today to help highlight the danger signs and symptoms of **#HeartFailure**.
#heartfailureawarenessweek
pic.twitter.com/m6D4J7RozH



Top media Tweet earned 4,488 impressions

Farewell to our colleague Mike Burke who is retiring after 42 years' service with **#UHG**.
pic.twitter.com/IS6jVmY3mY



Jun 2019 - 23 days so far...

TWEET HIGHLIGHTS

Top Tweet earned 7,064 impressions

Meet Cody the 6 year old Golden Retriever and the newest member of the team at Portiuncula University Hospital **#PUH**. Cody is an Irish Therapy Dog and on his to do list every week is to visit the patients' in the ICU.
bit.ly/2Wsaaul
youtu.be/RaOOBvix_58 @hselive

Top media Tweet earned 6,170 impressions

Welcoming the HSE's new Director General Paul Reid to **#UHG** to meet staff and learn about new developments at the hospital.
pic.twitter.com/px5jLNQvXC



Chief Executive Officer

Saolta Group

Dear Colleagues

Welcome to the summer edition of our newsletter. It is hard to believe that we are in summer already! Let's recap on the past few months which have been busy.

As you are aware, our recently published Saolta Group Strategy prioritised twenty projects for progression over the next three years. Many of these projects are already well underway. We are progressing with the new MCANs (Managed Clinical and Academic Networks) being trialled in Cancer Services and Women's and Children's Services.

Prof Michael Kerin has been appointed as the new Director for the Cancer MCAN and Prof John Morrison appointed as the Director for the new Women's and Children's MCAN. These new MCANs will be a new way of working and will provide a new clinically-led integrated governance structure. Briefing sessions for staff in relation to the new MCANs will be held on all sites over the coming months, in conjunction with briefing sessions on the new Group Strategy. I wish Prof Kerin and Prof Morrison well in their new positions and look forward to working with them in advancing Cancer services and Women's and Children's services in Saolta.

The Group Patient Administration System is also progressing well. This is the main information system which supports the day-to-day operations of the hospitals and it is used to record all activity including referrals, waiting lists, admissions and outpatient appointments. This is a joint project with our Community Health partners (CHO West and CHO Area 1) and involves rolling out the new system to all hospitals in the Group and across the community. This is a substantial project with many phases and it is expected to be fully implemented by January 2021.

The Options Appraisal Project is nearing completion. The main aim of this project is to assess service demand levels and identify infrastructural requirements needed in Galway to support the delivery of safe, quality care to our patients. The final report is expected to be completed shortly. I will update you further on this in our next edition of the newsletter.

In Board news, the Saolta Board of Directors are continuing to meet, with six meetings held so far this year. They visited Merlin Park University Hospital in April, Mayo University Hospital in May and University Hospital Galway in June. They have also held many Board Subcommittee meetings as part of their role in oversight of finance, manpower, strategy, audit and quality and patient safety.

In early June we had a visit from the new Director General of the HSE, Mr Paul Reid. He visited UHG where he met with the Saolta Group Management Team. He also met staff across a number of services in UHG. Paul intends to visit the other hospitals over the coming months and is very keen to meet front line staff.



Maurice Power, CEO

There have also been many other positive events, initiatives and service improvements taking place across our hospitals over the past number of months. The following are some highlights:

- Sligo University Hospital commenced a weekly outreach antenatal and gynaecology service clinic in the Ballymote Primary Care Centre.
- Letterkenny University Hospital introduced a new Text Reminder Service for OPD Clinic Appointments.
- The 'End PJ Paralysis' Campaign was launched in University Hospital Galway and in Portiuncula University Hospital. This initiative encourages patients to get up and get dressed each day while they are in hospital.
- A 'World Café' event was held in Sligo in May as part of the development of the new Group Patient Engagement Strategy. This was well attended by staff, patients and patient representatives from across the Group.
- Portiuncula University Hospital has been chosen as one of three hospitals nationwide to pilot Resist, a new hygiene awareness campaign to tackle superbugs.
- A new Family Room was opened at Sligo University Hospital, in collaboration with the Irish Hospice Foundation Design and Dignity Programme.
- The first registered Advanced Nurse Practitioner for Plastic Surgery in Ireland, Ms Bernadette Finneran, was recently appointed to Roscommon University Hospital.

I would like to thank everyone involved for all their hard work and efforts on these initiatives.

I hope you all have a wonderful summer.

Maurice Power
Chief Executive Officer

Chief Operations Officer

Midway through the year a number of projects continue to progress. We are at the design of the new Emergency Department / Women's and Children's development on the UHG site. The enabling works for the Radiation Oncology development at UHG are progressing well and the contract for the main build project will be awarded in the autumn.



Ann Cosgrove, COO

We are awaiting return of tenders for the Diabetes Day Centre in SUH and hoping, subject to funding, to begin work later this year. The final phase of the Letterkenny rebuild project is at an advanced stage and the radiology facilities will be commissioned on a phased basis over the summer months.

The Group Patient Administration System, Evolve (GUH), the EuroKing Maternity IT system and NCIS Cancer Information System in UHG and MUH continue to be implemented. The Ambulance Clinical Handover system will shortly be implemented on all sites.

Initiatives are in place to reduce waiting list across each hospital including additional clinics and theatre lists. To date up to May, 2019 Saolta has reduced its IPDC waiting list by 884 patients.

Saolta is leading out nationally on the Urology Pathways of Care project addressing three prioritised areas: Haematuria, Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms (LUTS) and Incontinence management.

I would like to acknowledge the work and commitment of all of our staff across the Group and I hope you all get the opportunity to take some time off over the summer.

Chief Financial Officer

Following a review of the May accounts the Group are over budget by €14.2m. Expenditure in the period to May has increased by €27.1m on the same period last year.



Anthony Boynes, I/CFO

The largest increase on 2018 is in payroll costs. This is partly due to an increase in WTEs with 343 additional staff in the last 12 months in an effort to fill critical posts to cater for increased ED pressures and provide additional services across our hospitals.

The Group's non-pay expenditure has grown by €9.4m on last year; the main increases are in the areas of drugs and medicines, laboratories and medical and surgical supplies.

The Group have set targets in cost containment plans of €9.5m for 2019. The plans cover areas such as agency, overtime, drug expenditure and the increased use of biosimilar drugs and gains in procurement across all expenditure areas without impacting on patient services.

Director of Human Resources

Health and Wellbeing - from the National Employee Engagement Survey

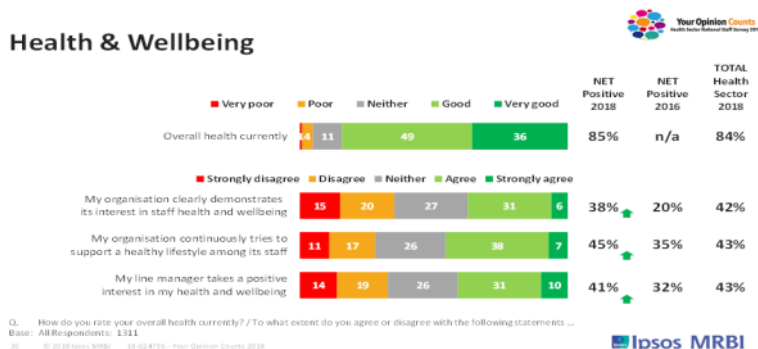


John Shaughnessy

Saolta staff responses reflect an increase in satisfaction in every category since the 2016 survey and our increases are comparatively better than the overall HSE increases.

Saolta's interest in staff health and wellbeing has increased by 90% since 2016 (the national increase was 45%). Saolta's support of a healthy lifestyle for staff has increased by 30% since 2016 (the national increase was 10%). Saolta managements interest in staff health and wellbeing increased by 35% since 2016 (the national increase was 10%).

Health & Wellbeing



Chief Director of Nursing and Midwifery

The third National Patient Experience Survey took place in May and the results will be available in late autumn. I wish to thank all staff that have encouraged our patients to respond and to those who have worked on quality improvement plans to address the areas that are highlighted in last year's survey.



Jean Kelly, I/CDONM

As part of the Saolta Strategy we are committed to updating our Patient Engagement Strategy for the next five years. To ensure that the patient's voice is at the centre of what we do, we held a Patient Engagement World Café event at the end of May.

A total of 50 guests participated including patients, their families and front line staff. The event gave everyone an opportunity to prioritise what we need in the strategy for the future. The valuable information gathered on the day will assist the steering committee in developing the Patient Engagement Strategy 2019-2024. I wish to thank the participants and the organisers.

I would like to congratulate the candidate Advanced Nurse Practitioners who have been successful in gaining accreditation by NMBI. I wish you all the best in your future practice.

I hope you all get the opportunity to have a break during the summer and that we get some sunshine.

Focus on Portiuncula University Hospital

International Day of the Midwife

In May, midwifery staff and colleagues from across PUH celebrated International Day of the Midwife with the theme 'Midwives: Defenders of Women's Rights'.

The event included an information stand which reflected the art and science of the profession and highlighted the unit's quality initiatives, poetry, art and feedback from service users. To mark the occasion, the catering department prepared a special celebration cake.



Irish Association for Nurses in Oncology Conference

At the IANO Annual Conference in March, Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialists, Deirdre Hanley and Vicky Costello from PUH received second prize in the annual poster competition for a service evaluation they carried out in the Oncology Department on treatment administration delays.

Also at the conference, Caitriona Duggan RANP Oncology at Portiuncula was voted the incoming secretary for the IANO.

Caitriona's role covers both inpatients and outpatient clinics and her work has made significant improvements in eradicating waiting lists for oncology outpatient clinics. Caitriona also reviews patients in the Oncology Department with various medical issues secondary to their treatment regime and disease. This enables the treatment to be given on a timely basis and avoids GP and Emergency Department visits.

Caitriona is currently working on quality improvement initiatives to provide more efficient outpatient care and reduce waiting times and enhance the services provided in the oncology day unit.



Deirdre Hanley, CNS with IANO President Rosemary Murphy.

Gold Happy Heart Award

Congratulations to the Catering Department at PUH who won a Gold Happy Heart Award for a third year running.

[Click here](#) to read more.



From left: Hanoria Riddel, Chef; Jack Kelly, Head Chef; Helen Glynn, Chef; Patricia O'Donoghue, Catering Manager; Josie McGrath, Catering Assistant; Marita Fogarty, Director of Nursing; Anna Mannion, Catering Assistant; and Karen Ward, Chef.

'Cody' the Therapy Dog makes his debut



To read about Cody's visit to the ICU at PUH and see video highlights, [click here](#).

Frailty Café at PUH

In April the hospital Frailty Fighters hosted a 'Frailty Café' as part of the FITT (Frail Intervention Therapy Team) project.

The Café was an opportunity to share knowledge and create connections to find solutions to the challenges faced by older people in community and hospital settings. The emerging themes of the day were collated and the relevant findings were included in an application for Sláintecare funding.

Putting the patient at the centre was a significant theme, along with an integrated and co-ordinated approach to patient care.



From left: Tracey Smyth, Antoinette Larkin, Colleen Connolly, Rosaleen Leonard, Roisin Jackman Delaney, Helen Heery, Lisa O Looney and Clare Kinahan. Missing from the photo - Roisin McHugh.

Improving End of Life Care

The Hospice Friendly Hospital (HFH) Programme is an initiative of the Irish Hospice Foundation in partnership with the HSE. In 2015, PUH became affiliated with the HFH programme and is an active member of the Hospice Friendly Hospital Acute Network.

In May PUH marked the HFH's 12 years of quality improvements for end of life care .

The aims of the Hospital Friendly Hospital Programme are:

- Enhanced end of life planning at every level
- Improved experience of end of life care for patients and families
- Appreciation and recognition of the challenges faced in the delivery of quality end of life care
- Continued support and development of staff.

Three projects in Portiuncula University Hospital have been awarded a quality improvement grant from HFH to a total value of €1,000 each. The successful projects are:

1. WIDE Review for de-prescribing.
2. Keepsakes pouch for patient belongings.
3. A specialist palliative care referral pathway for patients with advanced heart failure and specialist palliative care needs.



Social Work Department – Promoting Academic Learning

The Social Work Department at PUH promotes a strong ethos of academic learning accepting students on clinical placement from all the main universities. The most recent students were Priscilla Mhauri from NUI Galway and Deirdre Jennings from TCD who completed a 14 week clinical placement. This practice-based education enables the students to learn the clinical skills of medical social work in a supervised and supportive environment.

The students are facilitated to develop core competencies in medical social work: psycho-social assessments, counselling, care planning, advocacy, communication and multi-disciplinary work. This involves direct work with service users, submission of a practice portfolio and a practice evaluation report from the supervising social worker. The Department Manager, Caroline McInerney Layng, participates on the NUI Galway Masters in Social Work Advisory Board, which further promotes the academic partnership.



Clinical placement students Deirdre Jennings, TCD and Priscilla Mhauri, NUI Galway.

PUH Integrated Heart Failure Service

For the past 10 years Portiuncula University Hospital has provided an Integrated Heart Failure Service which is seeing an increasing numbers of patients. The combination of a growing population and improved treatments for heart conditions means that people are living longer with cardiac disease.

In May the Irish Heart Foundation held a successful information event in Athlone to raise awareness of the signs of heart failure. Speakers from PUH included Dr Aidan Flynn, Consultant Cardiologist; Catherine Nolan, Community Cardiac Clinical Nurse Specialist; Helen Heery, Senior Pharmacist; Saoirse Flanagan, Chartered Physiotherapist and Martina Greene from the Irish Heart Foundation. The event was chaired by Rosemary Thorpe, Cardiac Rehab Coordinator with Roscommon University Hospital.

The management of some of the more common symptoms and challenges of heart failure were addressed at this meeting including diagnosing heart failure, symptoms of and living with the condition, the effects of medication and the benefits of exercise.



From left: Liz Killeen, Community Cardiac CNS GUH; Catherine Nolan, Community Cardiac CNS PUH; Dr Aidan Flynn, Consultant Cardiologist PUH; Martina Greene, IHF Coordinator; Saoirse Flanagan, Physiotherapist PUH; Grace Gannon, Cardiac CNM PUH; Rosemary Thorpe, Cardiac Rehab Coordinator RUH; and Helen Heery, Senior Pharmacist PUH.

Improved Mortuary Facilities at PUH

The mortuary facility has recently been fully renovated and for patients, their families and staff. The project was completed in March this year. A small project team worked to redesign the existing mortuary which culminated in a full refurbishment of the post-mortem clinical mortuary, ancillary areas and the relatives' viewing area.

The refurbishment of the mortuary has created a much improved facility for the staff working in this facility and provides relatives with a space that is dignified during a very difficult time in their lives. The refurbished area creates a respectful, non-clinical environment, with a calm and soothing atmosphere.

We hope that this newly refurbished facility will be a sanctuary for families to be together in private at extremely difficult times in their lives. This refurbishment ensures that end of life and bereavement care is central to the everyday business of Portiuncula University Hospital.

The project team would like to acknowledge the work of the late Dr Michael Cassidy, Consultant Pathologist and his contributions to this project.



Outside the refurbished mortuary, from left: David Walker, Maintenance Supervisor; Dr Emer Caffrey, Consultant Pathologist; John Crosby, Mortuary Technician; James Keane, General Manager; Dr Suzanne Schneider, Consultant Pathologist; Máire Kelly, Clinical Support Services Director; and Don O'Connor, Former Laboratory Chief.

Audit of Sports Injuries

To read more about the prevalence and types of injuries treated by the ANPs at PUH, [click here](#)



Patient Experience Launch



In May, HIQA visited PUH to promote the 2019 National Patient Experience Survey and to learn about quality improvement initiatives at the hospital following last year's survey.

What Matters to You

Noreen Reidy, who is a staff nurse on St Joseph's Ward in PUH has completed a Postgraduate in Gerontology at NUI Galway. As part of the programme Noreen rolled out a service improvement initiative called 'What Matters to You'. This initiative has had great success in Scotland and was piloted in Ireland in St Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin and in the Midland Regional Hospital Portlaoise.

The main goal of 'What Matters to You' is to make the hospital experience more friendly and less isolating for the patient. This is achieved by getting to know the patient, their hobbies and interests and patients can bring personal items such as their radio, CDs, knitting into hospital with them.

This initiative was rolled out in March and has been warmly welcomed. Patients like the interaction and it gives nursing staff and other members of the multidisciplinary team a greater insight into their patients.



At the 'What Matters to You' information stand, from left: Antoinette Larkin, ANP Older Person; Noreen Reidy, Staff Nurse; and Marita Fogarty, Director of Nursing.

The Pharmacy Team – Finalists in National Awards

The Pharmacy Team at PUH were finalists in two award categories at this year's Hospital Professional Awards: Innovation and Service Development and Hospital Pharmacy of the Year.

In the Innovation and Service Development Category, the Pharmacist-led WIDE review was recognised as a significant service innovation. This pilot service is the first of its kind in Ireland to use Wholistic Integrated Deprescribing Evaluation (WIDE) medication reviews in order to improve patient outcomes and quality of life by optimising medications in the frail elderly population through tackling inappropriate polypharmacy. This is defined as a situation where one or more drugs are no longer needed.

A WIDE review looks at each of a patient's medication to evaluate if it could be de-prescribed or stopped because the potential for harm outweighs the potential for benefit. The review is carried out by a specialist pharmacist who gives tailored recommendations to the patient's medical consultant who can then act on the information. This service builds on the specialist pharmaceutical knowledge and skills of hospital pharmacists and uses these proactively to benefit patients.

In addition to the award nomination, the WIDE project has also gained recognition from Spark Ignite, the Irish Hospice Foundation, the Hospital Pharmacist Association Conference and will be presented at the Irish Gerontological Society Annual and Scientific Meeting.



Pharmacy Staff at Portlaoise University Hospital.

PUH Respiratory Laboratory

The Respiratory Laboratory Department at PUH is committed to providing expert and high quality services in the diagnosis and management of acute and chronic respiratory diseases. The respiratory laboratory is supported by a multi-disciplinary team of healthcare professionals which includes a Respiratory Consultant, a Respiratory Advanced Nurse Practitioner and Clinical Nurse Specialist, Respiratory Physiologists, NCHDs and clerical administration staff.

The department is equipped with the latest equipment and built-in facilities to support a diverse range of respiratory conditions. The respiratory laboratory provides a wide range of diagnostic tests and also undertakes sleep diagnostic tests.

In addition, the department supports respiratory outpatient clinics including Nurse-led Allergy Testing Clinic with Skin Allergy Testing, ANP-led Severe Asthma Clinic, Respiratory and Sleep Clinics.



From left: Dr Faisal, Respiratory Reg; James Keane, General Manager; Noreen Fallon, CNS Respiratory RUH; Dr Hilary Mc Loughlin, Consultant in Respiratory Medicine; Tara Byrne, ANP Respiratory; Emma Burke, CNS Respiratory; Máire Kelly, Clinical Support Services Director; Elsa Sanchez, Respiratory Physiologist; Marita Fogarty, DON; Filipe Afonso, Respiratory Physiologist; and Dr Roisin Hehir, Intern.



News from the Women's and Children's Directorate

New Twin cots for the Neonatal Unit in UHG

Dr Johannes Letshwiti, Consultant Neonatologist; Ms Aine Binchy, RANP Neonatology; Ms Anne Duignan, Physiotherapist; and Ms Aishling Slattery, Neonatal Nurse pictured with one of the new twin cots purchased for the neonatal unit in UHG with money raised by parents and members of the local community.

A New QI Initiative to prevent babies being admitted cold to the NICU at UHG

Last year 38 babies (15%) had neonatal hypothermia (a temperature $< 36.5^{\circ}\text{C}$) on admission to the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). This is not a new phenomenon. Neonatal hypothermia is associated with significant morbidity and mortality and preventing it has been a key performance indicator for the NICU for the past 5 years.

In January 2019 we started a quality initiative programme to reduce the number of babies admitted to the NICU from the gynaecology theatre with neonatal hypothermia to zero. This involved a process mapping exercise which incorporated the 10 steps of the WHO 1997 Warm Chain, with improvement required in seven of the steps.

The multidisciplinary project team was co-ordinated by the Advanced Nurse Practitioner in the NICU and several midwives championed the project and provided regular feedback and information on its progress and success.

Since 01 February, there have been zero cold babies admitted to the NICU from the gynaecology theatre. Continued education helped progress this project as staff recognised that blankets were superior to towels for keeping babies warm. The project became sustainable as staff took clear ownership, responsibility and accountability for ensuring new babies did not become hypothermic. In addition, breastfeeding rates have improved by 9% and admission rates have reduced by 9%.

This cost neutral project has significantly reduced the number of hypothermic babies admitted to the NICU. The importance of involving all staff in the project was highlighted.

We aim to roll out the project to all areas in the maternity department in UHG and the Saolta Group.

Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Study Day: GUH

The seventh Galway University Hospitals' Neonatal Study Day was held on Friday 10 May in the G Hotel.

Our new Consultant Paediatric Endocrinologist, Dr Niamh McGrath opened the event with an informative talk on thyroid dysfunction in neonates, interpretation, causes and management. Next up was Anne O Sullivan, an ANP from the Coombe who showed us how to assess pain in the newborn and apportion scores accordingly for treatment.

The directorate is undergoing a governance change and Dr Ethel Ryan, Director of Paediatrics and Neonatology for the Saolta Women's and Children's Directorate updated everyone on the Neonatal Strategy and the future plan for Neonatal care. This was followed by an interesting insight into neurodevelopment and positioning from Anne Duignan, Neonatal physiotherapist, GUH.

Delegates attended four mini workshops on techniques to perform a Lumbar Puncture, complete a Cooling Checklist, create baby nests and avoid nasal septal damage with the correct application of CPAP interfaces. This time was also utilised to view equipment stands sponsored by various medical companies.

In the afternoon, Áine Binchy, Advanced Nurse Practitioner in NICU in GUH, emphasised the importance of documenting newborn resuscitation in real time. She supplied several examples of resuscitation pages from her audit which highlighted the need for further education in documentation.

Dr Donough O Donovan, Consultant Neonatologist, GUH concluded the day with 'Hot Topics in Neonatology', a presentation on the 2019 guidelines of management of the respiratory care, which generated excellent discussion. It was a fitting end to the day.



RUH Safe Sun and Skin Awareness Campaign

Roscommon University Hospital took the opportunity to educate both staff and the public on skin awareness and adopting safe sun practices prior to the holiday season. The National Cancer Registry of Ireland (NCRI) predict a continued rise in both melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers based on an aging population.

RUH adopted a proactive approach by encouraging staff, their families and the general public to adopt safe sun practices to reduce their risk of skin cancer in the future. The NICE Guidelines for "Improving Outcomes for people with skin cancer including Melanoma" recommend that all patients and carers have access to high quality information. Education leads to self-awareness and early intervention therefore reducing the number of fatalities and serious cases of skin cancer in the future.

Skin cancer incidence and mortality rates are increased with age, however melanoma is disproportionately high in people under 35 (second most common cancer in age 15-34). Intermittent strong sun exposure is more damaging than moderate long term exposure in fact holiday sunburn once every 2 years can triple the risk of skin cancer.

Research has shown 6:10 melanomas and 9:10 NMSC are caused by the sun. 80% of cases could be prevented through adoption of safe sun behaviour from childhood to adulthood (Cancer Research U.K 2013)



Bernie Finneran, RANP, Skin Cancer; Siobhan Carty, CNM2, Ambulatory Care and Diagnostic Centre (ACAD); Jackie O' Connor, La Roche-Posay Representative; Loretta Connaughton, CNM1; St Coman's ward and Amanda O'Halloran, RANP, Plastic Surgery.

The plastics team provided high quality, evidence-based information on preventative measures, safe sun practices and timely recognition of skin cancers in line with the new national skin cancer policy. All participants received information leaflets and UV sun protection from sponsor, La Roche-Posay.



Speakers at the launch, back row from left: Ciaran McCann, Re-Act Productions; Maureen Jordan, Donegal Down Syndrome Association; Marie Kehoe-O'Sullivan, National Disability Specialist; Shaun Doogan, Re-Act Productions; Jean Kelly, Chief Director of Nursing and Midwifery, Saolta University Health Care Group; Professor Owen Barr, Ulster University; Niamh Walsh, PhD Researcher, Ulster University. Front row from left: Dr Anne Gallen, Director, NMPDU North West; Dr Siobhan O'Halloran, Chief Nursing Officer, Department of Health; Paul Gallen Jnr; and John Hayes, Chief Officer, CHO 1.

HSE Health Passport and 'Mission Possible' film

The launch of the HSE Health Passport to support people with intellectual disabilities when accessing healthcare, took place in Century Cinemas in Letterkenny on 18 June. The launch was followed by the premiere of 'Mission Possible', a short film starring Paul Gallen Jnr, which aims to create awareness of the Health Passport.

The Nursing and Midwifery Planning and Development Unit in the North West adapted, piloted and evaluated the Health Passport for people with intellectual disability using both Letterkenny University Hospital and Sligo University Hospital as the pilot hospital sites.

The launch was attended by over 200 delegates including representatives from the Department of Health, Donegal Oireachtas members and local media. Healthcare professionals from Letterkenny and Sligo University Hospitals and Community Services across Community Healthcare Organisation Area 1 (Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan and Sligo) were also in attendance. Working collaboratively on this piece of work and in attendance on the day were the Public Health Agency, Northern Ireland and Ulster University.

Mr Gerry Lane, Consultant in Emergency Medicine at Letterkenny University Hospital spoke at the launch and said, "The benefits of a Health Passport for people with an intellectual disability when accessing acute services are many, including enabling their voice to be heard by frontline health care professionals".

The Mission Possible video can be viewed [here](#).



Mr Gerry Lane, Consultant in Emergency Medicine, LUH speaking at the HSE Health Passport launch.



Attendees at the launch



Staff involved in the Surfer's Ear project included Dr Eoin Deering McCarthy, GP Trainee; Rachel Keane, Health Promotion student; Dr Seamus Boyle, ENT SpR; Grainne McCann, General Manager; and Prof Nash Patil, Consultant ENT Surgeon.

Surfer's Ear Project at Sligo University Hospital

The ENT Department at SUH are working on a project to determine the awareness of Surfer's Ear among cold water athletes and to get the message out about the importance of protecting your ears. The condition, which can affect everyone who is exposed to cold water over time, causes bony growths to develop in the ear canals and can lead to repeated ear infections and even hearing loss. The advice on protecting your ears is very simple - wear ear plugs. To read more, go to: saolta.ie/ears

In June, RTÉ News broadcast a story about Surfer's Ear which included footage from the OPD in the hospital and Dr Seamus Boyle at the Metal Man Swim Series in Rosses Point.

At the time of writing, the video had been viewed 115,000 times on Facebook. [Click here](#) to view the RTÉ video.



GUH HMT Information Sessions

The Hospital Management Team at GUH recently hosted an Information Sharing Session for staff.

This session provided staff with an overview of the hospitals' performance and showcased some of the developments and Quality Improvements that are taking place as well as the strategic plans for 2019.

The session was very well attended.





From left: Dr Vilasini Vikneswaramoorthy, Microbiology NCHD; Marie Ronan, AMS pharmacist; Dr Shomik Sibartie, Consultant Microbiologist; Rose Cafferkey, AMS pharmacist; Grainne McHale, IFCN; and Majella Sharkey, Surveillance Scientist.

MUH finalists at the Hospital Professional Awards

Congratulations to the teams from MUH that were finalists in three categories at the Hospital Professional Awards which took place recently. The categories were:

- Advancing the Standard of Care in Pain Management, represented by Joanna Fahey
- Infection Prevention and Control Team
- Consultant-led Hospital Team of the Year

The Infection Control Team at the hospital won the GSK ViiV Infectious Diseases Project of the Year Award which recognises excellence and dedication in the field of infectious diseases and antimicrobials.

The team also won the Consultant-led Hospital of the Year Award for demonstrating the best combination of team spirit and the enhancement of patient care at all levels.

New Family Room at SUH

The newly developed family room ‘Seomra Teaghlaigh’ located in Medical 7 ward was officially opened in May by hospital chaplain Fr John Carroll. The room was funded through the Irish Hospice Foundation’s Design and Dignity Programme, the HSE and local support.

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



GUH Staff Recognition Award



In May, the most recent Staff Recognition Award for GUH was presented to Anne Sloyan who works in Major Theatres in UHG. Anne was nominated by her colleagues for her exceptional dedication to her role, for the support and mentorship she provides to her colleagues and for being an advocate for patient safety and dignity. Also photographed were Mary Hynes, HR Manager, GUH on the left and Chris Kane, General Manager, GUH on the right.

New Patient Experience Enhancement Initiatives at RUH

In response to feedback from last year's National Patient Experience Survey, RUH has introduced a number of new initiatives to enhance the patients' experience at the hospital. These include a new Patient Information Booklet and Folder and Patient Comfort Packs.

The new 27-page booklet provides patients with information relevant to their hospital stay as well as helpful contacts and useful information for when they leave hospital. The booklet was compiled in collaboration with the Roscommon University Hospital Patient Council with input from patients and staff. The booklet is available on all wards and departments in the hospital.

In last year's National Patient Experience Survey, the majority of participants in the hospital reported positive experiences; 91% of participants said they had 'good' or 'very good' overall experiences, compared with 84% nationally. One of the areas highlighted for improvement was the provision of information to patients on possible symptoms post-treatment.

The booklet includes general information on RUH, details on services and supports, information on admission to hospital, what to bring, care in hospital, hospital activity, nutrition and hydration, hospital facilities, infection control, hospital charges, discharge planning and how patients can follow up and provide feedback after they are discharged. Along with the booklet, patients will also receive an information folder. The folder holds all documentation provided by the hospital, including leaflets, appointment letters, prescriptions and post-treatment information relevant to the patient.



Another initiative to enhance the patient's experience at the hospital is the introduction of Patient Comfort Packs. The packs are for patients who may need essential toiletry supplies during their hospital stay and include items such as a toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner and comb. Comfort packs are also available in the family room for relatives.

Saolta Patient Engagement World Café Event

Patients and their families, along with staff from hospitals in the Group, took part in the World Café event in May to update the Group Patient Engagement Strategy.





At opening of the newly developed Garden at Unit 4 in MPUH: Margaret O’Toole, Business Manager MPUH; Chris Kane, General Manager GUH; Mary Cotter, Asst Director of Nursing, MPUH; Greg Conlon, Group Health and Wellbeing Lead; Edel Callanan, Physiotherapy Manager MPUH and Valerie Flattery, Occupational Therapy Manager GUH.

Garden Party at Unit 4, MPUH

A garden party was recently held to celebrate the completion of a newly developed Therapeutic Garden at Unit 4, Merlin Park University Hospital Galway.

Ms Chris Kane, General Manager cut the ribbon and officially declared the Therapeutic Garden open. She said, “I hope this garden will be a place of comfort, a place to enjoy nature, a place for peace if staff are in need of a break, a place for patients to chat with family and friends. A quiet place away for the activities of the ward.”

On the day musical entertainment was provided by the Merlin Park University Hospital Miscellany Choir accompanied by staff members Hannah Loughnane and Greg Cotter.

After the speeches, patient Paschal Wallace and Chris Kane planted trees to commemorate the opening.

Support Mayo Pride

The Health Service LGBTI+ and Allies Network will be taking part in Mayo Pride for the first time on 20 July in Castlebar.

All staff – not just staff who identify as LGBTI+ - working in the HSE in the hospitals and community services are encouraged to attend and are welcome to bring family and friends. Mayo Pride will be a celebration of diversity and inclusion for all and a milestone for the West in terms of valuing different perspectives, experiences and individuals.

For further information, please contact Cathy Blake, LGBTI+ and Allies Network Committee Member and Mayo Pride Event Organiser on 094 9049373 or 0877664190 or email cathy.blake@hse.ie



Men’s Health and Wellbeing Event in Sligo



To read more, [click here](#)

Other News from across the Saolta Group

Flu Vaccine

A total of 4,015 healthcare workers (40.1%) in the Saolta Group received their flu vaccine in the 2018/2019 flu season. This was an increase on last year when a total of 3,691 health care workers (37.1%) received their flu vaccine.

Healthcare workers are at increased risk of exposure and flu infection compared to the general adult population. Flu vaccine is recommended for healthcare workers to protect them from getting flu and to reduce transmission of flu from them to their family, colleagues and patients.

The HSE aims to achieve a target of 60% flu vaccine uptake among health care workers. Flu vaccination is the best protection during flu season as it saves lives.



Saolta Multidisciplinary Foot Team attend International Symposium on the Diabetic Foot

In May, members of the Saolta Multidisciplinary Foot Team (MDfT) – Prof Sean Dinneen, Consultant Endocrinologist, GUH; Dr Diane Bergin, Consultant Radiologist, GUH; Dr David Gallagher, Consultant in Infectious Disease, GUH; Catriona Rourke, Podiatrist, RUH/GUH; Mr Conor Cahill, Podiatrist, GUH; and Ms Lisa Reddington, CNM, Diabetes Day Unit, GUH - attended the International Symposium on the Diabetic Foot in The Hague, Netherlands.

The symposium is held every four years and is the largest multidisciplinary meeting devoted to lower extremity complications in diabetes with healthcare workers and scientists from many different backgrounds and almost 100 different countries participating.

The symposium showcases current and best practice worldwide and is an opportunity for clinicians and academics to network and share their own experiences and anecdotal evidence. The symposium covered topics such as peripheral artery disease, foot surgery, wound healing, basic science, practical workshops, lower limb biomechanics, neuropathy, infection, etc.

Dr Bergin presented a poster on the Use of Ultrasound in the Diagnosis of Charcot Foot. Prof Dinneen presented on Reducing Diabetes-related Lower Extremity Amputation at a National Level: Lessons from Retinal Screening. Both presentations were extremely well received and gained widespread approval from clinical peers worldwide.

The next ISDF meeting is in 2023 and the Saolta MDfT aims to have more presentations and research to showcase.



Conor Cahill, Podiatrist GUH; Lisa Reddington, CNM, Diabetes Day Unit GUH with Catriona Rourke, Podiatrist RUH/GUH at the International Symposium on the Diabetic Foot.

Saolta Surgical Nursing Programme



In 2018 the first Saolta University Health Care Perioperative Nurse Interest Group was developed with representation from all sites and the National Clinical Programme for Surgery and Anaesthesia and the Theatre Quality Improvement Programme.

One of the key priorities of the group was to review the educational needs of surgical nurses within the group. A survey was then conducted on educational needs of surgical nurses within Saolta. Following a return of 120 surveys it was identified that there was a need for further education and training as many nurses highlighted that new specialities of surgery had been added to their ward areas with no further training.

Feedback from the survey highlighted that on a regular basis they nurses in level 2/3 hospitals were transferring patients to the level 4 hospital for specialised surgery but were unable to give the patients relevant information as they didn't feel they had the appropriate knowledge.

The surgical course was then developed by the Saolta Perioperative nurse interest group in collaboration with the Director of the CNME Galway. Following approval for funding Lynda Doyle was appointed as the course facilitator. The course began in January and was run over 3.5 days with the ultimate aim to improve care of the patient throughout their surgical experience and to educate and update surgical nurses and promote best practice. Those who completed the course were awarded 29.5 CEUs.

The Inaugural Saolta Surgical Nursing Programme finished in April with a total of 21 nurses completing it. Quality Improvement Projects was presented on the final day with participation from all 6 hospitals. QI Projects included

- Reducing unnecessary fasting times
- Wound Care Instructions Leaflet on discharge
- Use of TED stockings in preventing DVT – practice differs in 2 sites
- Early recognition of AKI in the surgical wards – Think Kidney
- Survey Comparing Pain Scales – Best Practice

Feedback and evaluation of the course was extremely positive from the participants with the consensus being that the course is "very relevant, beneficial, interesting and informative."

All the projects were carried out by staff working together across different site. The findings will now be disseminated across the group. A second course is now in progress with a third planned for Autumn. Plans are also in place for the development of a Saolta Nursing Conference where the improvements initiatives of this course and the following courses will be presented to all.



#OurPeople



Paul Nolan, Chief II Cardiac Physiologist, UHG

How did you get interested in the role of Cardiac

Physiologist? I did a BSc in Human Physiology back in 1998 and ended up working for a while as a Manager in a Sports Retailer, however I always wanted to do something with my degree.

I heard about this type of work - Cardiac Physiologists are one of a group of Clinical Measurement Physiologists, who work in Vascular, Neuro, Respiratory and GI - and I was interested when a temporary student job became available in St Vincent's in Dublin for 3 months. Following further study I qualified and worked there for 8 years before coming to Galway in 2005.

What is a typical day? Cardiac Physiologists are one of the over 25 Health and Social Care Professionals (HSCPs) that make up over 25% of the clinical workforce in the HSE. We work in both the Non-Invasive Cardiac Investigations department and also in the Cardiac Angio Lab. We work closely with the Cardiology Consultants, NCHDs, nursing, radiographers and other staff such as portering.

In the Non-Invasive Department we perform and report on ECG (heart tracings), exercise tests and echocardiograms (heart ultrasounds). We also look after patients with pacemakers (prevent the heart going slow) and implantable defibrillators (treat dangerous fast rhythms with a shock). In the Cardiac Angio Lab, we are part of the team performing angiograms (imaging of the coronary arteries), stenting (opening blocked or narrowed vessels with tiny metal scaffolds) and now replacing tightly narrowed valves with new TAVI technology.

We try and rotate during the week as much as possible so you might be doing echocardiograms on one day but pacemaker checks on another and all our work is in direct contact with patients, aiding in the diagnosis and treatment. We perform tests on patients ranging from babies in Neonatal ICU to patients in their 90s and for every speciality from Oncology to Respiratory, so the work is extremely varied, both in nature and the type of patients we meet.

We are given a great deal of clinical autonomy, such as reporting on Echocardiograms, or leading the Cardiac Devices Clinic as many of our staff have internationally recognised accreditation in such areas.

As department head, I obviously also have to organise lists, rota staff and ensure that our team and department work as productively as we can to meet an increasing demand. It also involves liaising with hospital management, consultants, patient flow and nurse managers in Coronary Care and the Angio Lab.

If you had to describe your job in three words or one sentence, what would it be? Delivering patient diagnostics and treatments for over 20,000 patients per year.

What is the most rewarding part of your job? A number of things, firstly being part of the public health system, where despite its flaws, we are aiming to be there for patients and to make a difference. Secondly the patient interaction, sometimes it can lift your spirits hugely. Last but not least, it is a privilege to lead a team of committed, highly skilled team of Cardiac Physiologists who not only care for patients, but also for each other.

Update from the Saolta Project Management Office

Saolta Strategy 2019 - 2023

The Saolta Strategy 2019-2023 was launched in March and the focus has now turned to the implementation plan for the 20 priority projects (over the next 3 years) to address the key themes of the strategy.

Confirmation of project sponsors, identification of project leads and more detailed scope/deliverables for individual projects is nearing completion with the process being overseen by the Strategy Sub Committee of the Saolta Board. Further details are available from

PMO.Saolta@hse.ie



Saolta Integrated Governance Project

Detailed design continues to support the introduction of Cancer and Women's and Children's Managed Clinical and Academic Networks (MCANs) over the coming months.

These MCANs will oversee the respective services in the future development of integrated working across Saolta hospitals and between hospital and community to improve services for patients and staff. Key MCAN posts including Director, General Manager and Director of Nursing have been recruited who will be working in partnership with staff on individual sites to achieve the above. This model will be evaluated on an ongoing basis with a process in place for feedback from key staff/others via the PMO.

Phase 1 of the implementation of the Women's and Children's MCAN has seen the further integration of both Galway and Portiuncula Maternity services with the introduction of new clinics for high risk mothers in both UHG and PUH with enhanced referral pathways. In addition, a new shared Consultant Obstetrician resource is in place working across both sites and there are plans in place around implementing a standardised maternity IT system and developing integrated clinical handover processes.

Sláintecare/Integration Projects

Saolta, CHO 1 and Community Healthcare West are collaborating to progress the Saolta/CHO joint working in line with Sláintecare priorities. While there are many examples of ongoing projects underway there will be key focus on chronic disease projects/ older persons and innovation in integration going forward.

A total of 34 proposals from the Saolta Group Hospitals were submitted for consideration to the Sláintecare Integration Fund (€20m available at national level for 2019). Further feedback is expected by the end of June regarding the outcomes of the national review process.

Options Appraisal

The options appraisal of infrastructural requirements (currently and up to 2031) in GUH as the Saolta Model 4 hospital continues.

Workshops were held during May to agree future demand/ configuration for the proposed Elective Hospital in Galway and key interim priority areas for GUH including the ED Development (Maternity and Paediatrics), Laboratory, and Cancer Services).

The final Options Appraisal report and report on Elective Hospital Development is to be completed by the end of June 2019





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