

Grúpa Ospidéal  
Oirthear na hÉireann



Ireland East  
HOSPITAL GROUP



# Ireland East Hospital Group Year in Review 2019





## Word from our Chair

This year has been a very challenging year as demand for acute hospital services continues to rise inexorably. We see this in presentations in the Emergency Departments across the Group; demand for outpatient services and our hospitals operating at or beyond full capacity. We are facing into a winter season which has already shown signs of record demand for hospital and community care. Our medical, nursing and general staff are responding magnificently to the challenge but I doubt it is sustainable in the long run.

Changing the delivery of healthcare will not be easy; the reorganisation of the Health Service Executive into planned Regional Health Authorities which would include acute, primary and community care, if not planned and executed well, could be little more than a return to the Health Boards which were not conspicuously successful in the delivery of integrated services. We will watch with interest the roll-out planned for 2020 and 2021; however, one consequence will be that the Ireland East Hospital Group will not exist in its current form primarily due to our geographic reach from Wexford to Dublin and west to Mullingar and Navan. I will, nonetheless, be very proud of what we have built over the period of our existence and record, on behalf of the board, my appreciation of and thanks to our CEO, Mary Day, who has given highly effective and committed leadership to the Group.

In 2019, we held IEHG board meetings at many of our hospitals including St. Vincent's University Hospital, Regional Hospital Mullingar, St. Luke's General Hospital, Carlow/Kilkenny and the Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, in order to grow relationships and further understanding among Board members of the key issues and challenges facing individual hospitals.

Can I take this opportunity to thank all of you and wish you and your families the very best for the holiday season. Your contribution is very much appreciated by our patients and their families.

**Thomas Lynch, Chairman of the Board, Ireland East Hospital Group**

**Cover (l-r): John Horan, GAA President; Prof Fionnuala Ní Áinle, Consultant Haematologist at the Mater Misericordiae University Hospital and Chair of the IEHG VTE Service Review Group, Brian Howard, Dublin GAA, Ann Marie O'Neill, Founder of Thrombosis Ireland; and Brian Fenton, Dublin GAA**



## Word from our CEO

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the Ireland East Hospital Group's (IEHG) Year in Review for 2019.

2019 has been a busy and challenging year delivering increased demand across our hospitals. The announcement in July on the reorganisation of our health service into Regional Health Authorities will impact on IEHG going forward as the Group will be split across three regional areas. As CEO of the Ireland East Hospital Group, I am immensely proud of all that we have achieved together in the four short years since our Group's inception. I firmly believe that stratified aggregation of hospitals (i.e. formal associations of model 2,3 and 4 hospitals) is an essential prerequisite to facilitate and assure success of the Sláintecare-envisioned, population-based, vertical integration model at whole system level.

Over the past 12 months, we have continued to focus on developing and delivering on our Group's three core Strategic Pillars:

1. Operational Excellence
2. Integrated Healthcare
3. Academic Health Science Centre

In 2019 we held three Strategic Steering Committees chaired by IEHG board member Professor Elaine Mead.

### Operational Excellence

The IEHG commitment to delivering Operational Excellence through Lean Healthcare has continued throughout 2019 with the support of the Group Improvement team. Key value streams for **Emergency Care, Patient Flow, Ophthalmology, Frailty, Women's Health, Laboratory** and **Cancer** are delivering improvement for patients across the Group.

Despite ongoing challenges, IEHG continues to perform well in comparison to the other Hospital Groups in key Unscheduled Care metrics: PET performance in both the 6-hr and 9-hr and >75yrs categories. Our **'Journey to Better Care' Flow programme** has resulted in reduced PET times and earlier access to beds. Patients are more involved in their care and discharge planning, their stay in hospital is shorter and the use of discharge lounges, where available, ensures a smoother and safer discharge. Frontline staff have a better understanding of daily demand and how to manage daily and hourly flow, with improved communication and teamwork enabling better daily planning.

Continuous improvement in resource utilisation is a key component of our Operational Excellence pillar. To that end, during 2019 the Group progressed work toward the creation of a **Hospital Group Staff Bank** to provide an efficient, flexible and cost-effective supplementary resource to hospital wards and departments to meet their short-term staffing requirements. In the first instance, staff bank posts will be for our five statutory hospitals, recruiting nurses, midwives and healthcare assistants, with other grades anticipated when fully operational. During 2019, the centralisation of data collection for nursing and midwifery

agency and overtime usage continued with agency usage reduction noted in six out of ten hospitals. The implementation of the staff bank will further support reduction on agency reliance.

The demand for effective and efficient laboratory testing for patients is dramatically increasing in Ireland. This will inevitably place greater demands on **IEHG laboratories** and across the wider healthcare sector. In 2019 the Laboratory Strategic Plan and Laboratory Action Plan were developed which resulted in a dynamic group of individuals from our Laboratory service coming together to deliver improvements in flow, efficiencies and the creation of a shared learning network. I look forward to the further outputs of this Group in 2020.

Within **Health Informatics**, under the leadership of Professor Neil O'Hare, in 2019 several pilot projects within the Group on behalf of the HSE were commenced. These will continue over the course of 2020 and include:

- The integration of the national Individual Health Identifier (IHI) into systems and operations within the Mater hospital
- The implementation of a fully electronic e-referrals process within Regional Hospital Mullingar, and hopefully linking with the OPD communication solution being trialled in three of our hospitals: Navan, Holles St, and Wexford General.
- The initial implementation of the proposed Shared Care Record across the Mater / Cappagh hospitals, including access into the local GP and community facilities.

The on-going development of our Group Performance Dashboard in 2019 has been pivotal to our performance management and moving to more real-time data with advances in the integration of Group-wide metric / KPI data into a single platform. A significant development in 2019 has been the IEHG Critical Care Dashboard (HDU and ICU).

### **Integrated Healthcare**

Integration with the community is central to addressing the **ophthalmology** challenges within the Group. To this end, in 2019 we progressed the development of our Integrated Eye Clinical Academic Directorate to encompass hospital and community services with the aim of improving the quality of the service and expanding access to address adult and paediatric waiting list challenges.

In 2019, IEHG also commissioned a study with UCD entitled '*Enhancing access to and integration of care – a longitudinal study* (the **GP-Link Study**). This research programme is led by the UCD School of Medicine, and the General Practice & Primary Care Research Network. The aim of the network is to enhance patient care, treatment outcomes and therefore population health, by conducting multidisciplinary programmes of research in general practice and primary care to inform future service planning, and their subsequent delivery and evaluation.

In 2019, the **IEHG/CHO Older Person's Forum** was established to co-ordinate the direction and application of service improvements and developments for this cohort of patients within our population. The Forum provides assurance to the Integration Care Pillar Steering Group that improvement is occurring across all hospitals and is aligned with the Integrated Care Programme for Older Persons and the National Clinical Programme for Older People. The Forum will ensure that the deliverables set out within the overall IEHG Strategic Plan and Sláintecare implementation plan with regard to improving population health are achieved and

will assist in the development of new models of care to deliver more effective and integrated care for our older population.

IEHG has developed a HUB and spoke model in the current year with the Mater hospital and its regional centre in Mullingar to develop **dermatology outreach services** across the population which will include primary care. This service will create greater efficiencies and savings in drugs, resources and equipment from critical mass, based on the cancer and ophthalmology model already in place.

The Service Improvement team has been a central pillar of this process internally through local involvement of all IEHG staff, using Lean methodology, to promote process improvement and service change while building the interface with community partners through action on delayed discharges and HCPs.

In 2019, IEHG with its primary care and the community partners, completed a **maturity assessment** to understand the readiness of the system within the IEHG population of 1.1 million to **manage its population's health in a collaborative way**. The tool assessed the current state of readiness across four defined pillars of population health management:

- Governance and Decision-Making Systems
- Clinical Systems, pathways and leadership
- Data and Digital readiness
- Finance/Payment and Contracting Systems

The **VTE roadshow** in September/October was an excellent example of integrated working within an integrated health system as a very important public awareness campaign travelled throughout the IEHG Health System visiting Hospitals, Communities and UCD.

Budget 2019 provided €20 million for the establishment of a new ring-fenced **Sláintecare Integration Fund** to test and scale how services can best be delivered. The Sláintecare Integration Fund sought submissions with a focus on prevention, community care and integration of care across all health and social care settings. I was delighted to announce that a number of our hospitals were successful in their submissions to the Sláintecare Integration Fund and look forward to implementing these initiatives in 2020.

In November, we also hosted an information session at the Mater with leaders from the Canterbury District Health Board in New Zealand on the success of the **Canterbury Model** of integrated care and the importance of data integration in its implementation.

### **Academic Health Science Centre**

Our development toward an Academic Health Science Centre (AHSC) continued in 2019. The IEHG AHSC Oversight Group continued its focus on embedding research and academic medicine in the clinical setting, while Dr Rhona Mahony, former Mater of the National Maternity Hospital, was appointed the lead of our newly established **Women's Health Clinical Academic Directorate (CAD)**. The maternity strategy for this CAD was launched on 6 December and we are currently progressing a Clinical Leadership Course in collaboration with Trinity College Dublin (TCD).

Our **Cancer CAD (CaCAD)** is now aiming to apply for Comprehensive Cancer Centre Accreditation under the leadership of Prof Risteard O'Laoide. At a discussion forum in UCD in October, attendees from the Mater, St Vincent's, IEHG and UCD voiced their commitment to the ongoing development of the CaCAD and the belief that the expertise and critical mass

of patients provided by the Mater and St Vincent's is essential to the development of better academic health care for Ireland's cancer patients.

With regard to our **Research Directorate**, under Prof Peter Doran we launched a new Clinical Research Centre (CRC) in Wexford General Hospital and St Luke's General Hospital, Carlow/Kilkenny this year, commencing a new era of access to academic medicine for patients in the South-East.

In relation to our **Genomics CAD**, a Master Research Collaborative Agreement was signed between Genomics Medicine Ireland (GMI) and UCD in March under the stewardship of Prof Owen Smith.

UCD Health Affairs also successfully organised two **Academic Health Science Centre Lecture Series** in 2019, bringing leaders in academic medicine to the Mater, St Vincent's and UCD to speak on a variety of topics including new developments in childhood, gynecological, prostate and breast cancer as well as obesity and metabolic surgery, neurological disease and the AHSC model.

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In August, the Mater and St Vincent's submitted bid documents for consideration to become a **Major Trauma Centre** and **Major Trauma Unit** within the Central Trauma Network for Ireland. The Independent Expert Assessment panel site visits took place on 20 August with both sites demonstrating capacity and capabilities to achieve this important milestone for trauma service in Ireland. I want to acknowledge the significant work and efforts from both sites in completing the bid and representing their site and the Group in such a remarkable way. We look forward to the outcome results expected to be announced shortly by the Department of Health.

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2019 also saw the retirement and departure of several esteemed colleagues from our Group office and I would like to once again thank Ann Donovan, Catherine Clarke, Deirdre Wynne, Niamh Clohessy, Lorraine Dempsey, Gisela Storniolo, Dolores Power and Kate Brophy for all their hard work on behalf of our Group and wish them all the best in their new endeavours.

As always, a special word of thanks needs to go to the staff at every level across our Group who again this year continued to inspire through their incredible commitment and dedication to delivering the best possible care for our patients.

Wishing you all a very happy Christmas and a peaceful new year.

**Mary Day**

**CEO, Ireland East Hospital Group**

# Our Year in Figures



**284,124**

Inpatient/Day Case  
*(to end October 2019)*

**685,957**

Outpatient  
*(to end November 2019)*

**302,223**

*(to end November 2019)*

People seen in ED



**12,050**

Total WTE  
*(to end November 2019)*

**1,760**

Medical/ Dental  
*(to end November 2019)*

**4,616**

Nursing & Midwifery  
*(to end November 2019)*

**1,458**

Health & Social Care  
*(to end November 2019)*

# Lean Service Improvement

## In 2019, Our Lean Service Improvement Work Has Meant:

Gynaecological Cancer patients start their treatment earlier as all new cancer patients are seen in our Gynaecological Oncological Priority Clinic in less than 14 days from referral received.



The number of patients waiting on trolleys in Wexford General Hospital has decreased by 53%



Children attending St Luke's General Hospital, Carlow/Kilkenny are receiving better, safer care since the introduction of the Paediatric Urgent Care Clinic



Patients, from across Ireland, attending IEHG hospitals will have their cataracts looked after faster. Many of these people can look forward to their post-operative care being delivered in the community in 2020.



Frailty intervention teams have been funded by Sláintecare in two of our Model 3 hospitals (Mullingar and Wexford) based on initial improvement work. In 2019 the IEHG/CHO Older Person's Forum was established to further ensure frail and elderly patients receive better care.



In 2019, all IEHG hospitals held events focused on developing pathways to improve patient flow through the hospital system.



# Some 2019 Highlight Events



## IEHG LAUNCHES ITS CORPORATE VIDEO

In February, IEHG launched its corporate video highlighting the important work taking place across our 11 hospitals and academic partner UCD to deliver better, safer patient care.

You can view the video online on our website at [www.iehg.ie](http://www.iehg.ie)

## CELEBRATION MARKING MILESTONE FOR CANCER TREATMENT

IEHG hosted an important event on Wednesday 6 March to mark the landmark performance of over 200 Cytoreductive Surgery (CRS) combined with Hyperthermic Intra-Peritoneal Chemotherapy (HIPEC) surgical procedures being carried out in the Mater Misericordiae University Hospital. This marked a momentous success for Irish healthcare, considering patients were unable to access this type of procedure in Ireland before its repatriation from Basingstoke in 2013, and a significant milestone for IEHG's Cancer Clinical Academic Directorate (CaCAD). As part of the CaCAD's work programme, a similar service has now been expanded to women with advanced ovarian cancer. As part of this event, we invited our esteemed international colleagues Professor Brendan Moran (pictured) from Basingstoke and Professor Willemien Van Driel from the National Cancer Institute in Amsterdam to attend as international speakers.



## IEHG IMPROVEMENT WORK PUBLISHED IN GLOBAL LEAN JOURNAL



In March of this year, IEHG had another article on its Lean improvement work published in *Planet Lean, the Lean Global Network Journal*. Service Improvement Lead Fiona Keogan wrote about bringing people together to provide better care to older, frail patients: <https://planet-lean.com/frailty-lean-healthcare/> In December 2018, IEHG Service Improvement Director Anne-Marie Keown, wrote on how to transform a large hospital system: <https://planet-lean.com/how-to-transform-large-hospital-system/>

# Some 2019 Highlight Events

## IEHG HOSTS ITS 2<sup>ND</sup> LEAN IN HEALTHCARE CONFERENCE

On 4 April, IEHG is hosted its second Adoption of Lean in Healthcare Transformation Conference in the Freeman Auditorium at the Mater hospital. This event was an opportunity for the staff of IEHG and its partners to celebrate the success of our Lean journey to date as we drive for transformation in the healthcare we deliver. Staff from IEHG hospitals presented on the measurable and sustainable improvements which have been achieved through applying Lean methodology across a broad range of clinical services. We also had the opportunity to hear from some of the international partners who have supported us and who are on a similar journey using Lean to transform their services.



## ACADEMIC HEALTH SCIENCE CENTRE LECTURE SERIES

In May 2019, IEHG and UCD Health Affairs launched its Academic Health Science Centre Lecture Series. These lunchtime lectures were held in St Vincent's, the Mater and UCD with speakers giving an insight into their areas of research and the importance of academic medicine. Due to the success of the first edition, a second series was organised in November/December. Speakers in both series included Dr Rhona Mahony, Prof Tim Lynch (pictured), Prof Walter Kolch and Prof Helen Heneghan.



## IEHG MID-YEAR TOWN HALL

IEHG's mid-year Town Hall took place in the Catherine McAuley Lecture Theatre at the Mater hospital on 15 May. The afternoon was divided into two parts with the opening session focusing on the Group's planned submission in the national competition to establish a Major Trauma Network for Ireland. At our second session, speakers provided updates on the exciting work happening on VTE (Prof Fionnuala Ní Áinle), Genomics (Prof Owen Smith) and through our recently established Clinical Academic Directorate for Women's Health (Dr Rhona Mahony).

# Some 2019 Highlight Events

## IEHG'S 4TH ANNUAL NURSING & MIDWIFERY SYMPOSIUM

The IEHG Practice Development Group held its fourth Nursing & Midwifery Symposium on 22 May 2019 in the National Maternity Hospital, showcasing initiatives that enhance patient care within our hospitals. All 11 hospitals presented on a variety of topics from 'The use of patients own drugs in Cappagh hospital' to '#EndPjparalysis' in St. Columcille's Hospital. There were 21 short presentations including four focusing on IEHG Lean Service Improvement initiatives. The keynote address by Professor Jonathan Drennan, University College Cork, was on Safe Nurse Staffing in Ireland.



# BMJ Journals

## IEHG VTE PAPER PUBLISHED IN BMJ OPEN

The first data on VTE incidence in an Irish hospital group was published in the journal *BMJ Open* in June. The paper, by the IEHG VTE Working Group, is entitled 'Venous thromboembolism incidence in the Ireland East Hospital Group: a retrospective 22-month observational study'. The objective of the study was to determine the incidence of venous thromboembolism (VTE) and the incidence of hospital-acquired VTE (HAVTE) arising within the population served by the Ireland East Hospital Group. The paper can be viewed at:

<https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/9/6/e030059>

## IEHG AT LEAN LONDON SUMMIT

In October, Anne-Marie Keown and Emma Smyth (pictured) presented on behalf of the Group at the Lean Healthcare Transformation Summit in London. This platform provided the opportunity to share the progress, successes and reflections of our IEHG Lean Transformation journey to date with healthcare leaders from across Europe and the USA. IEHG is steadily building an international reputation for initiating and sustaining system level change. We are committed to creating an excellent organisational culture that will thrive on continual change and improvement.



# Awards & Recognition



**Regional Hospital Mullingar** was crowned **National Winner and Energy Saving Champion** in 'The BIG Switch Off' Competition in January 2019



Following an NSAI inspection in January 2019, the **Central Decontamination Unit (CDU)** in **Our Lady's Hospital, Navan (OLHN)** was awarded accreditation to ISO 13485: 2016 **Quality Management Systems for Medical Devices**. OLHN was the first HSE hospital to achieve this standard.



On 27 February 2019, **Regional Hospital Mullingar's MFIT Team** were crowned **CHO Service Integration Category Award Winners** at the **Community Healthcare Organisation Awards 2019**.



In April, **Mater Nurse Aoife McGivney** received the **Lord Mayor's Award** for her contribution to Dublin society. Earlier in the year, Aoife had shown great presence of mind to perform life-saving CPR on a Dublin Bus driver.



# Awards & Recognition



In May 2019, Roseanne Killeen (**Our Lady's Hospital, Navan**) and Nicola Dillon (**St Columcille's Hospital, Loughlinstown**) were nominated for **HR Manager of the Year** at the **HR Leadership and Management Awards 2019**.



In May 2019, IEHG awarded certificates of recognition to its four **2018/2019 60% Staff Flu Vaccine Target Breakers: Regional Hospital Mullingar (77%), St Columcille's Hospital, Loughlinstown (73%), National Maternity Hospital (66%) and St Luke's General Hospital, Carlow/Kilkenny (62%)**



In June 2019, Ciarán Muldowney of St. Vincent's University Hospital was awarded **Hospital Pharmacist of the Year** at the **Hospital Professional Awards 2019**. There were four MMUH winners at the awards – Brid Ryan for **Excellence in Oncology**, Claire Shine and Maríosa Kieran for **Excellence in Patient Safety**, Aisling Beakey and Prof Fionnuala Ní Áinle for **Haematology Project of the Year** and Sara Winward for **Excellence in Respiratory Initiative**



In November 2019, Clare Kennedy (Advanced Midwife Practitioner, **St Luke's General Hospital, Carlow/Kilkenny**) and Anna Wade, Paediatric Orthopaedic Clinical Nurse Specialist, **Cappagh National Orthopaedic Hospital**) won **INMO Midwife and Nurse of the Year** respectively.



# IEHG 'Stop the Clot' Roadshow



Over five weeks in 2019, the Ireland East Hospital Group (IEHG), in collaboration with Thrombosis Ireland, our CHO and Healthy Ireland colleagues, organised an extremely successful 'Stop the Clot' VTE Awareness Roadshow Campaign.

The principal aim of the campaign was to raise awareness of the danger of blood clots to as many staff and members of the public as possible.

More people die each year from blood clots than from breast cancer, prostate cancer and road traffic accidents combined and they are reported to be the number one cause of preventable death in hospitals.

The Big Red Bus made over 25 stops to our 11 hospitals and their communities, and to UCD. National and regional radio got on board in each of the regions - Ivan Yates pulled the Bus onto the Hard Shoulder and Ann Marie O'Neill, Founder of Thrombosis Ireland, and Prof Fionnuala Ní Áinle, Consultant Haematologist at the Mater and Chair of the IEHG VTE Service Review Group, made their TV Debut on Virgin Media's Weekend AM with a viewership of over 750,000.

Ann Marie also handed out over 10,000 Alert Cards to healthcare professionals in hospitals and in the community, to patients and the public, in the five short weeks.

Many hospitals in IEHG have now set up VTE Working Groups to help continue to raise awareness in their hospitals and to help promote a healthier, more active lifestyle with the aim of preventing a very preventable DVT event from happening to one of their patients.

Many thanks to our partner Prospectus for its support and to Bayer, Sanofi and Daiichi-Sankyo for its education grants, without which this campaign would not have been possible.

**Pictured above l-r: John Horan, GAA President; Prof Fionnuala Ní Áinle, Consultant Haematologist at the Mater and Chair of the IEHG VTE Service Review Group, Brian Howard, Dublin GAA, Ann Marie O'Neill, Founder of Thrombosis Ireland; and Brian Fenton, Dublin GAA**

# Ireland's First Ever Liver & Double Lung Transplant



Robert Sheahan from Co. Limerick is the first person in Ireland to receive a liver and double lung transplant, thanks to organ donation. The 29-year-old underwent the long and complicated transplantation operation in June of this year and is now well on the road to recovery. Two surgical transplant teams - one from the **Mater Misericordiae University Hospital's** (MMUH) National Heart and Lung Unit and the other from **St Vincent's University Hospital's** (SVUH) National Liver Transplant Unit worked for around ten hours on this life-saving operation for Robert. Mr Emir Hoti, Director of the National Liver Transplant Programme at SVUH got to work first of all, transplanting the liver. Mr Hoti said, "Robert has benefitted the most of any person I've seen or treated for transplant. The fact that this is a first for Ireland shows how far we have come in terms of our transplant programme. The operation itself, while complicated, was a success and our collaboration with the team at the Mater was superb."

While Mr Hoti was performing the liver transplant on Robert, Mr Lars Nölke, Head of the Heart and Lung Transplantation Unit at MMUH, was simultaneously transplanting the heart from the same donor to another transplant patient. When the liver transplant was complete, Mr Nölke and the Mater team took over to transplant first one lung, and then the second. Approximately 15 medical professionals, from anaesthesiologists to scrub nurses were involved in the ten-hour operation. The operation was a success and a few days later, on his 29th birthday, Robert Sheahan came to in the ICU unit. He spent the next two months recovering in the Mater and has now been discharged home but is making weekly visits to the Mater for follow up.

Professor Jim Egan, Director of Organ Donation Transplant Ireland, said, "Organ donation saves lives. Robert's remarkable journey and recovery and the fact that this is the first double lung and liver transplant in Ireland is only made possible through organ donation. We would ask everyone to discuss this life-saving issue with their families."

**Pictured above (l-r): Mr Emir Hoti, Robert Sheahan and Mr Lars Nölke**

# Unified Gynaecological Oncology Service



The **Ireland East Hospital Group (IEHG) Cancer Clinical Academic Directorate (CaCAD)** strategy is to become a single cancer centre operating across two sites (**Mater Misericordiae University Hospital** and **St Vincent's University Hospital**) with accreditation as a Comprehensive Cancer Center by the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECI).

The IEHG Gynaecological Oncology Group (IEHG GOG) was one of the first cross-institutional Tumour groups initiated by the CaCAD.

In 2018, the IEHG Gynaecological Oncological team identified areas within the patient pathway and service delivery in both hospitals that required improvement. It was agreed that a unified gynaecological oncology service should be established between the Mater and St. Vincent's to improve the patient journey and the quality of care for women availing of this type of cancer treatment.

To facilitate this improvement work, a **Lean process improvement journey** was commenced in July 2018, beginning with a Value Stream Analysis (VSA) and followed by a series of Rapid Improvement Events (RIEs) in 2018 and 2019. The standardisation of process steps for the patient journey and the optimisation of data availability across the two sites were identified as key to ensuring the delivery of a best-practice patient pathway. The IEHG Gynaecological Oncological team engaged with both patients and staff and utilising Lean methodology redesigned Triage and MDT processes in order to streamline the pathway for patients attending Priority, Review and Virtual Clinics.

Some of the outcomes of this improvement work include:

- A system of increasingly accurate, joint **data collection**
- The design and set up of a **Priority Clinic**, to include Radiation Oncology
- The implementation of a **Virtual Clinic** to reduce hospital visits and value patients' time
- The creation of an **MDT coordinator** post
- IEHG has resourced a single **Gynaecological Oncology HQ** (for the MDT coordinator, three nurses and two junior doctors), improving patient safety and review
- A standardised referral form

According to Bill Boyd, Consultant Gynaecological Oncologist at the Mater hospital and a member of the IEHG Gynaecological Oncology Group, "The improvements we have made mean that we are now offering women the same standardised, efficient service week in week out. We have changed the way we run our clinics to include increased consultant face time and to reduce unnecessary visits. There is now a one-stop-shop clinic for new patients to see the surgeon and radiation service at the same time. The changes implemented have markedly cut down the wait time from referral letter to first treatment and have reduced the wait time for results."

# Talk with Dr Rhona Mahony



**Dr Rhona Mahony is the Executive Director of the IEHG Women's Health Clinical Academic Directorate and former Master of the National Maternity Hospital in Holles Street**

25 years of obstetric practice has taught me the broader importance of women's sexual and reproductive health in society. For too long women's health has been treated as a narrow set of siloed health issues, with little recognition of the centrality to society's overall health and wellbeing. There is abundant research conducted over the past number of decades to demonstrate the societal benefits of investment in women's health. Good maternity

and gynaecological healthcare saves lives, prevents disease and promotes gender equality by increasing women's participation in society while promoting better health for infants and children. This has a multigenerational effect and if we are serious about social equality then we must be very serious about excellence in healthcare for women and children.

The Ireland East Hospital Group (IEHG) has moved to a model of healthcare that drives clinical excellence for patients by aligning the hospitals and universities in healthcare delivery so that cutting-edge research translates into cutting-edge care. Patient care is at the heart of everything we do and in Ireland East we want every patient coming through the door to receive the highest possible standard of care. Internationally, clinical academic directorates have proved to be a very successful model of care attracting top class clinical staff who understand the benefits of university alignment in their future personal and professional development. This translates into better care for patients. We are delighted that one of the first CADs established in Ireland East is a directorate for Women's Health.

We have just launched our maternity strategy which focuses on four core areas: enhancing clinical care pathways and clinical care delivery – these programmes will focus on obstetric ultrasound, gestational diabetes, community antenatal care and benign gynaecology. The other core areas focus on the development of robust, networked clinical governance structures, promoting talent and education across the many disciplines in the Group and the development of some exciting research projects which will focus on specific maternal diseases like diabetes in pregnancy and broader social studies on outcomes in high-risk pregnancies.

Kilkenny has been a pilot site for the introduction of some of our programmes and we have been very encouraged by the benefits of team workshops, Rapid Improvement Events (RIEs) and Lean methodology in planning better care delivery. We have also developed a physician leadership programme for 2020 which we hope will create a network of leading physicians equipped to advocate and drive better healthcare for patients.

We look forward to rolling out the first year of our strategy in 2020 and to capturing our progress so that we can be agile and flexible in achieving the goals we set ourselves over the next three years.

# Launch of Integrated Midwifery Service in Kilkenny



Tuesday 12 November 2019 saw the Maternity Department of St. Luke's General Hospital, Carlow/Kilkenny officially launch their new Integrated Community Midwifery Service for women in the Kilkenny and Carlow area.

The launch of this service, which has been operational since 2018, means that women who attend St Luke's Maternity Services are provided with greater choices in the type of care and birthing options that were previously available, including early-home transfers.

*"This service offers choice to women in the type of care and birthing options that are available to them. This service is safe, quality-driven, evidence-based and tailored to the individual needs of women and their families,"* said Clare Kennedy, Registered Advanced Midwife Practitioner and Clinical Lead for Midwifery-Led services in St Luke's.

Clare, alongside a team of six midwives, works to provide this service to expecting mothers. The service aids in supplying midwifery-led care to women who attend the hospital, in line with the national maternity strategy, that is safe, standardised, of high-quality and offers a better experience and more choice to women, families and fathers.

The official launch took place in St Luke's General Hospital's Education Centre and included women who recently used the service. *"Everyone is so amazing in this hospital. I can't get over it. It's not just a service we received. It's love!"* said recent service user, Anna Tomaz.

If you wish to learn more about the newly launched Integrated Community Midwifery Service or if you have any questions, please email [Community.MidwiferySLGH@hse.ie](mailto:Community.MidwiferySLGH@hse.ie).

# UCD CRC at St Luke's Kilkenny & Wexford General



## Enhancing Patient Care through Research

In 2019, University College Dublin, in conjunction with the Ireland East Hospital Group (IEHG), announced the expansion of UCD's Clinical Research Centre (CRC) to St Luke's General Hospital, Carlow/Kilkenny and Wexford General Hospital. The rolling out of the CRCs research programme to Kilkenny and Wexford commenced a new era of access to academic medicine for patients in the South-East.

The UCD CRC is an academic-led, multi-site, patient-focused facility for clinical and translational research within the UCD School of Medicine. Since opening in 2006, the UCD CRC has had a significant impact on the national research landscape. It has been created to deliver the UCD's strategic objective of advancing high-quality, impactful, investigator-led translational and personalised medicine research. The goal of the UCD CRC is to positively impact on patient lives, support hospitals within IEHG and deliver the School and University Research strategy.

*"This is the first time the UCD CRC has been expanded outside of Dublin. Through the partnership between University College Dublin and IEHG, we are committed to ensuring all patients in our hospital group, regardless of geography are provided access to cutting-edge care,"* said Mary Day, CEO of IEHG.

Clinical trials, conducted by the UCD CRC, will provide access for patients to promising new therapies that are often an important treatment option. Alongside St Luke's and Wexford General Hospitals, the Clinical Research Centre includes, alongside the Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, St Vincent's University Hospital and the National Maternity Hospital as academic research partners.

## Clinical Research and Education

Research Oversight Committees have been formed at both St Luke's and Wexford General Hospitals and they have responsibility for the oversight of research at each site. To date, three genomic study applications have been filed with the South-East Ethics Committee and have received conditional approval. We expect that these studies will be up and running early in 2020. In October, a positive site assessment was conducted at Wexford General Hospital by Novo Nordisk with a view to opening their teenage obesity study at the hospital. The teams at both hospitals are also assessing the potential to extend other studies that are currently being run by the CRC to their hospitals.

From an educational point of view, there was excellent attendance at the Good Clinical Practice (GCP) training sessions in October (Wexford) and November (St Luke's), delivered by the CRCs Quality and Regulatory Affairs Manager. The educational programme for 2020 will commence with a Clinical Trials Masterclass in January/February with a methodological course being run later in 2020.

**Pictured above (l-r): Prof Andrew Deeks, President UCD, Lily Byrnes, General Manager of Wexford Regional Hospital, Mary Day, CEO of the Ireland East Hospital Group, and Prof Peter Doran, Director at the UCD Clinical Research Centre**

# Collective Leadership for Safety Cultures



The 'Collective Leadership for Safety Cultures' (Co-Lead) programme was launched in the Mater Misericordiae University Hospital in November.

Co-Lead is a five-year, HRB-funded research project at UCD that aims to develop and test the impact of collective leadership on patient safety cultures. The Co-Lead programme is based on the premise that healthcare is delivered by teams and therefore it is important that every team member's expertise and knowledge is leveraged,

recognising that all team members play a vital role in quality and patient safety. Co-Lead enables teams to lead collectively, sharing responsibility for team performance and patient safety.

The programme was co-designed by healthcare staff, patient representatives and researchers. It comprises 19 components, eight of which should be completed by teams: six core components related to collective leadership for team performance and safety culture, and 2 additional components which teams can select depending on their team needs, goals and priorities. All components take one hour to complete and can be self-run by healthcare teams in their work environment at regular intervals.

In order to learn more about Co-Lead, visit [www.ucd.ie/collectiveleadership](http://www.ucd.ie/collectiveleadership) to view co-designed materials available through the *Resource Hub*.

Short videos introducing Co-Lead and some elements of the programme can be viewed here: [tinyurl.com/IntroducingCo-Lead](http://tinyurl.com/IntroducingCo-Lead)

**Pictured above (l-r): Dr Steve Macdonald (Research Scientist, University College Dublin), Mr Ken Fitzgibbon (General Manager, Our Lady's Hospital, Navan) and Mr Alan Sharp (Chief Executive Officer, Mater Misericordiae University Hospital)**

# National Patient Experience Survey



The Ireland East Hospital Group (IEHG) is committed to improving patient experiences of care and services and recognises how important it is to listen and respond to our patients' feedback. Informed by the results of the National Patient Experience Survey (NPES), we strive to identify key initiatives to deliver improvement from the front door throughout the patient's journey in our hospitals.

We take every opportunity during our improvement events to ensure that patient engagement is core to the process by listening to the 'voice' of the patient and understanding what matters most to them.

In 2019, IEHG was delighted that our hospitals again achieved positive results in the National Patient Experience Survey, and that we achieved the best overall results of any hospital group. This indicates that our hospitals have developed processes and systems to agilely respond to patient needs and improve the overall experience of care within IEHG, which we must now maintain and improve upon.

In 2019, 86% of patients reported a good to very good experience of the care they received in our hospitals. Over the three-year period since the survey was introduced, IEHG is consistently above the national average in the 'Very Good' (9-10) grouping. Over the same period, the overall IEHG 'stage of care' scores indicate incremental improvement across the system.

In order to ensure that areas for improvement are addressed, hospital Quality Improvement Programmes (QIPs) will include a focus on discharge planning and the preparation and information required for patients and families prior to leaving hospital, in order to ensure the safe discharge of patients.

IEHG quality improvement work continues at pace across multiple sites, embedding better quality, patient-centred care across our services. It has been wonderful to witness the significant work being carried out by staff on service improvement and quality initiatives to achieve better, safer processes for delivering care and services to patients.

Our transformation improvement journey enables everyone across the organisation to understand the daily challenges of frontline staff and work on the right problems, and to connect strategies, objectives and performance to the actions of individual staff, teams and units to improve our patients' journeys.

IEHG would like to express its thanks and gratitude to the patients who provided their input into the National Patient Experience Survey. You have contributed to an invaluable body of work which is a key component in developing strategies for quality improvement of patient care across the service.

We also wish to pay tribute to the commitment and hard work of all the staff across the Group in delivering positive patient experiences and championing this survey. We look forward to progressing the identified improvements together over the coming months.

# Interview with Paula Lawler, Group Director of HR



## How many staff are employed within IEHG?

The Ireland East Hospital Group (IEHG) workforce totalled 12,021 employees (whole time equivalents) at the end of October 2019 working across the 11 hospitals in our Group (six voluntary and five statutory) and providing acute hospital services to over one million people. With a focus on the development of services and ensuring appropriate staffing levels are in place to meet increasing service development needs, we have increased staffing levels in the Group by 20% in the four years since the establishment of IEHG in 2015.

## What initiatives has the Ireland East Hospital Group supported to better engage staff?

Since 2017 we have been working with the *Great Place to Work Institute* supporting our hospitals to create greater levels of employee engagement, trust, flexibility and productivity to enable our staff to deliver a safer, better quality service to our patients. This work has assisted our hospitals in the development and implementation of employee engagement improvement plans developed through common initiatives that support team working, enhance communications, demonstrate employee value, maximise employee potential and embrace diversity. In addition, the work undertaken through our service improvement initiatives utilising Lean principles and methodology to deliver continuous improvement and change has been a key driver of increased staff engagement across our workforce. The positive change has been initiated through a bottom-up approach where staff across all disciplines and all levels have been actively leading and participating in the change management programme. I have been very impressed by how our staff have embraced this change programme with enthusiasm and motivation and this continued commitment is acknowledged and appreciated.

## What outcomes have been reported since the promotion of the Great Place to Work initiative?

The feedback we have received indicates that our hospitals enjoy having this international benchmark to measure themselves against other employers across the public and private sectors. It also allows our hospitals to think differently about they can better engage staff. Some of the positive outcomes we have seen include Town Hall events where staff are invited to contribute to the strategic development of the hospital, the development of staff newsletters to improve internal communication, and long service awards to recognize and thank staff members who have given the greater part of their careers to the health service. The results for IEHG in the *Your Opinion Counts – Health Sector National Staff Survey* in 2018 showed that Job Satisfaction increased across the Group by a net positive score of 11% compared to the 2016 results and I believe that the Great Place to Work initiative was a positive contributing factor to this result.

## What was your HR highlight of 2019?

It would be very difficult for me to pick just one but I was particularly proud to see both Roseanne Killeen (Our Lady's Hospital, Navan) and Nicola Dillon (St Columcille's Hospital, Loughlinstown) nominated for HR Manager of the Year at the HR Leadership and Management Awards. They have both done incredible work for staff in their hospitals.

