



Dear Colleagues

Welcome to the Autumn / Winter edition of Connect.

The newsletter is full of updates on new service developments /

improvements to the benefit of our inpatients, outpatients and those attending our ED. The move of some of the paediatric services out of the Hospital to the Urgent Care Centre on the campus and to the RDSC across the road we have reconfigured space on level two which has afforded us the opportunity to expand the footprint for two of our busiest services Dermatology and Gastroenterology. Both of the improvements will make a very positive impact on waiting times for patients.

With regard to waiting times our ED continues to be challenged with increasingly high numbers attending. To date this year attendances are 46,000 up 5% on last year with over 13,000 admissions, up 9% on last year. Those aged over 75 our most vulnerable attendances are up 12% on the same time last year that is almost 6,000 patients and 15% of those have needed admission. Our OPD waiting lists have reduced by 4,555 patients or 12% compared to last year, improving access for our patients remains a key priority.

The new Scanner which you will read about is improving the time to diagnose in ED we are still short of capacity to move patients out of ED and up to wards. Following the completion of a strategic assessment report we have sought and received confirmation for an additional 72 acute inpatient beds (all single rooms), we are site ready and are awaiting final funding approval on these beds.

Finally on behalf of the Management Team I want to thank you our GP colleagues and your teams for your support and engagement throughout the year.

Every best wish for a healthy and happy 2024.

Best wishes

Lucy Nugent
Chief Executive
Tallaght University Hospital

New Scanner for ED

Thanks to support from the TUH Foundation and Bartra Healthcare the ED now has a new CT scanner which comes with scanning protocols and built-in software for contrast visualisation.

The new scanner offers patients in the ED access to the highest standard of emergency medical care available.

The Brainomix AI software, well known for its ability to identify stroke-associated brain damage swiftly and accurately, will empower clinicians to make rapid, reliable decisions critical to the patients' clinical outcomes.



The new scanner located in the ED

The CT scanner also frees up capacity in the Radiology Department for general, scheduled outpatient services, thereby further helping to reduce the public waiting list for CT scans.

Nutrition eLearning Course

The Department of Nutrition & Dietetics at TUH have recently launched a new eLearning course for doctors. It is called, "Nutrition Essentials for Non Consultant Hospital Doctors and Healthcare Practitioners in the Acute Care setting." This course is the first of its kind in Ireland.

The dietitians at TUH designed this module to ensure that doctors can identify the signs of malnutrition and the components of good nutritional care. The module is currently available for all health professionals on HSeLand.



Pictured are the module launch are: Siobhan Glynn, Meath Foundation; Manon Van Alphen, Technology Enhanced Learning Manager, CLD; Kate Muldowney, Senior Dietitian; Mary Hickey, Quality Improvement; Sinéad Feehan, Dietitian Manager; Tom Martin, Educational Technologist, CLD

X - Twitter

The Hospital has a new X* account. Follow us @ [TUH_Tallaght](https://twitter.com/TUH_Tallaght)

*formerly known as Twitter!



Dermatology Service

Space in the Hospital is at a premium with so many of our services expanding to cater for the growing demand on our services. Following the move of a number of the paediatric services to the new CHI building, the Dermatology service secured a larger footprint on Level 2 of the Hospital.

Before the move to the new Dermatology Treatment Unit, the lack of space was hindering the number of patients that could be seen across all the nurse treatment areas. Some of the treatments carried out in the Dermatology Nurse Clinics include Patch Testing, Photodynamic Therapy, Dermojet, Cryotherapy, Nurse led minor operative lists and Phototherapy. The new treatment area has three phototherapy machines which has enabled the nurses to now offer a full time phototherapy service.

The expansion of the services will result in an additional 1,600 phototherapy treatments each year. The main aim of the Dermatology Service is to provide timely diagnosis and management for patients with skin disorders particularly inflammatory skin conditions and skin cancer. The Nursing service is an integral part of this process. The implementation of the new Dermatology Treatment Unit has enabled the Advance Nurse Practitioners, Kelly Impey and Carmel Blake to improve their services by increasing the amount of patients they see in their clinics. This enables us to see more patients with increased access to ANP led clinics and reduce waiting times to access this service.

The Dermatology service runs 10 consultant-led clinics per week, along with extra clinics after hours to deal with the growing number of patients needing the service.



Members of the Dermatology team from left to right in the back row: Kelly Impey, ANP; Dr. Caitriona Hackett, Consultant Dermatologist; Niamh Barnes, Staff Nurse; Margaurita O'Brien, ADON and Heidi Winston, CNS. Left to right in the front row: Amanda Gordon, Skin Cancer CNS; Evonne Healy, Medical Directorate Nurse Manager; Laura Dillane, CNS; Ann Marie Day, CNS; Carmel Blake, ANP and Maria Whelan, CNM2

There are dedicated clinics for renal transplants, rapid access pigmented lesion clinics, monitoring of patients on systemic immunosuppressant drugs and biologics and Skin Cancer.

The addition of the Skin Cancer coordinator role within the Dermatology service is streamlining the patient's journey from diagnosis to treatment. Skin Cancer CNS Amanda Gordon is providing essential support to these patients and coordinating patient care with the Dermatology team and linking with other multidisciplinary teams.

Recruitment is ongoing for additional Clinical Nurse Specialists and Staff Nurses in the service which will mean further growth in the number of services that can be provided and patient's that can be treated.

Centre for Digestive Diseases

In October the Hospital were delighted to host a visit by our former colleague Professor Colm O'Móráin, in recognition to the invaluable contribution he made to patient care he officially opened the Colm O'Móráin Centre for Digestive Diseases.

Professor O'Móráin was the first to prove that Duodenal ulcers could be cured by antibiotics and later in his career started bowel screening in Ireland, which was piloted in the Hospital before being rolled out nationally. It is both a great privilege and a responsibility for us to carry his legacy by continuing the great work he started.

We were able to open this new unit by repurposing space which became free after day surgeries (where patients return home the same day) were moved into the Reeves Day Surgery Centre (RDSC). Located within the Hospital, it represents an overall investment of over €1.7M, there are now two new procedure rooms and a post procedure scope wash room.

The new Centre will enable us to carry out an additional 4,300 oesophageal endoscopy and colonoscopy procedures a year, it also includes the Endoscopy & Gastroenterology Departments, which have developed innovative new services such as Dietitian-led Gut Therapy for IBS, Hi-Resolution Oesophageal Physiology, Liver Elastography and being established as the national lead centre for Capsule Endoscopy and the study of H.pylori resistance.



Pictured from left to right at the official opening were from left to right Fiona Delaney, CNM; Dr. Sarah O'Connell, Consultant Gastroenterologist; Professor Colm O'Móráin; Dr. Niall Breslin, Consultant Gastroenterologist; Professor Barbara Ryan, Consultant Gastroenterologist; John Kelly, Deputy CEO of TUH and Professor Anthony O'Connor, Consultant Gastroenterologist & Clinical Lead of the Department of Gastroenterology at TUH

ICU Infographic

Following a successful application to the Adelaide Health Foundation Innovation Fund the reception area in our ICU Wing is the first in the country to display a simple, colourful and clinically accurate informative infographic like this.

The project sits very well within the TUH Innovation Strategy of improving patient care through a culture of innovation, taking old ideas and presenting them in a new and accessible way, in service of a better experience and outcomes for our patients and their families, demonstrating the very best of innovation.

Commenting on the infographic Dr. Melanie Ryberg, Principal Clinical Psychologist & Clinical Neuropsychologist in ICU said "It is well established that families experience significant levels of stress and distress during the admission of a loved one to ICU. For most of our families, the sudden and unexpected admission of their loved one will be their first (and possibly only) experience of the world of ICU.

International research has shown that family members, as well as patients themselves, are at risk of experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder and other distress-related psychological difficulties specifically related to their ICU experience; this can hamper long-term recovery for our patients and significantly impact the quality of life and wellbeing of their families.



Pictured from left to right following the arrival of the infographic are Dr. Natalie Cole, Head of Innovation at Innovate Health; Dr. Melanie Ryberg, Principal Clinical Psychologist & Clinical Neuropsychologist in ICU; Lisa Dune, CNM3 ICU and Niamh Gavin, CEO of the Adelaide Health Foundation

Lots of work has been done internationally to 'humanise' the ICU for patients, this simple initiative would go a long way to humanising the experience of the ICU for the families also.

Clinical Chemistry Goes Green

The Clinical Chemistry Laboratory at TUH have recently received a Bronze level certification by My Green Lab, the non-for-profit organisation endorsed by United Nations Race to Zero as a key measure of progress towards a zero-carbon future.

The My Green Lab Certification is regarded as the gold standard for laboratory sustainability best practices around the world and, as of Monday, October 23rd, funded and supported by Science Foundation Ireland for all research laboratories in the country. The TUH Clinical Chemistry laboratory is, to our knowledge, only the third clinical/hospital laboratory in Ireland to be certified by My Green Lab.

The certification award is a result of concerted effort by the whole laboratory team, from lab aides, scientists to consultants, to make sustainability a mainstay of their everyday work practices across several categories (energy, waste, infrastructure, plug load, cold storage, large equipment use, recycling and waste reduction, water use, procurement and resource management, travel...)

The certification provides the team with the tools to implement tried-and true methods rooted in science to dramatically reduce the environmental impact of laboratories without disrupting the critical work underway. Following the success of the team achieving this status, the enthusiasm is spreading across the lab with the Microbiology laboratory now starting the process of achieving this certification and the whole of Laboratory Medicine department planning to follow suit.

Innovate Health & a patient healthcare journey

Our patient, Rona began her kidney dialysis treatment in September of 2021. While this treatment was vital for her health, it was also preventing her from continuing to work due to the length of her three weekly dialysis sessions at the Hospital.

As Rona was keen to return to work she asked our Renal Home Therapy Team if she could join their home haemodialysis programme. However early on in the training process it became apparent that Rona was finding it impossible to connect or disconnect the dialysis lines by herself, with her one remaining free hand. Rona says "The lines were twisting and turning, it was just too wobbly."

Despite the obvious challenge, the Renal Home Therapies team did not accept defeat. They engaged with Innovate Health, the Hospital's special Innovation team to see if a solution could be developed. After meeting with Rona to hear and see first-hand what the challenge was and what Rona needed, designer Alexander Fives developed a clever design solution to solve the problem.

Alexander made a bespoke plastic device (see pic) which looks just like a flat board with a raised sloped edge on one side. This raised edge has special slots which can hold the various lines steady, which means that Rona can now manage her own treatment independently.

Rona is now having her dialysis at home and says, "The new holder is working great." A wonderful achievement, well done to all involved.



The bespoke plastic device created for Rona



Pictured from left to right Renal Clinical Nurse Specialist Jen Young with her Patient Rona

Health Meals Scheme

A new TUH/Meath Foundation initiative which saw healthy ready meals delivered to dialysis patients has proven very successful.

At the outset, an Irish company, Meals4Health were identified that could cater for people with medical issues. Working with our renal dietitian Meals4Health amended some of their recipes following a nutritional analysis and ingredient lists review.

As a result of this collaboration ten “kidney-friendly” meals were identified as suitable. Meals were delivered chilled and could be refrigerated for three days or frozen for longer and heated by microwave or oven. Six meals were delivered every two weeks. These meals were advised to be eaten on dialysis days and were helpful if the patient felt tired.

The project was funded by the Meath Foundation with Meals4Health waiving their delivery fee. Almost 900 meals were delivered and consumed over a nine month period.

The scheme was targeted at those who wouldn’t qualify for the regular meals on wheels service. This project successfully demonstrated the feasibility of provision of kidney friendly meals via an alternative food delivery method to a cohort of vulnerable patients that currently do not qualify for Meals on Wheels. It demonstrated a high level of patient satisfaction with the service and food provided.

Voice of the patient

“They’re very handy for after dialysis. I have a meal defrosting now for when I get home.” Age 82, 47 months on Dialysis

“The meals brought me back to a place of good physical health.” Age 46, 31 months on dialysis

“I’d probably eat a burger and chips or a ready meal/cottage pie from Aldi, but they’re not kidney friendly, if I wasn’t getting these.” Age 48, 37 months on dialysis

Meal delivery throughout Ireland for people with Kidney Disease

Meals4Health prepares fresh, tasty meals delivered to your home. Your dietitian has confirmed that these meals are safe for patients with kidney problems (They are low in salt and low in potassium).

This service can be helpful on dialysis days if you find you feel tired or don't have time to cook. If you have any swallowing problems, you can ask for these meals to be pureed/minced moist/soft and bite-sized. If you have coeliac disease, you can also ask for the meals to be gluten free.

How it works

- 1 Choose your Meals**
- 2 Place Order**
Mention that you are a kidney patient and if you have any other dietary requirements. Give the project code:!
- 3 Meals Cooked**
- 4 Meals Delivered to your Home**

Upcoming Events for the Diary

The Academic Primary Care Centre Public Lecture Series is a lecture series co-hosted by Trinity College Dublin and An Cosán. These public events bring academic staff of Trinity College, as well as their research partners, to the local community in Tallaght.

The high quality, accessible talks are aimed at stimulating debate and community engagement on some of the health-related topics of today. The events are open to everyone to attend, with limited numbers for on-site attendance but unlimited access online via Zoom. Details and details are below, by clicking on each event you can select to attend in person (events take place in the Russell Building in Tallaght) or by Zoom.

Details below for three upcoming talks early in 2024.

Date and Time	Speaker and Topic
2pm-3pm, Thursday, February 22nd 2024	Professor Brett Duane, Sustainability in Healthcare
2pm-3pm, Thursday, April 11th 2024	Professor Rose Anne Kenny, Positive Aging
2pm-3pm, Thursday, June 20th 2024	Dr. Annemarie Bennett, Healthy Eating Across the Lifecourse

New Consultants

Please see below new staff members to join the Consultant Team at TUH.

Name	Discipline
Dr. Colm Kirby	Consultant Rheumatologist
Dr. Karen Sheehan	Consultant Anaesthesiologist
Dr. Peter Wheen	Consultant Cardiologist
Dr. Aidan Grufferty	Consultant in Emergency Medicine
Dr. Claire Frith-Keyes	Consultant Anaesthesiologist
Dr. Alan Blake	Consultant Anaesthesiologist
Dr. Josephine Soh	Consultant Physician in Geriatric Medicine
Mr. Robert Piggott	Consultant Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgeon (SJH/TUH)
Mr. Conall Fitzgerald	Consultant Otolaryngologist (SJH/TUH)



If you would like any more information about any articles in the Connect or have suggestions for future editions please do get in touch
Email: GPConnect@tuh.ie