



**GRADUATE
ENTRY
MEDICAL
SCHOOL**
UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK
SCOIL LEIGHIS IONTRÁLA
IARCHEIME OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

GRADUATE ENTRY MEDICAL SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

December 2015 | www.ul.ie/gems/

New Library & Education Centre in Association with UL opened at St. Luke's General Hospital



L-R Hilary Coyle (student), Prof Austin Stack Prof of Medicine, Sharon Nolan School Manager, Seamus Jennings (student), Cillian Mahony (student), Prof Mike Larvin Head of School, Henry Dillon (student), Prof Deirdre McGrath Director of Education, Róisín Monaghan CAL Manager, Luke Murtha (student), Aisling Fitzsimons (student).

The Dr. Jim Mahon Library and Education Centre and the Susie Long Day Services Unit at St Luke's General Hospital Carlow- Kilkenny were officially opened by the Minister of State with Responsibility for Rural Economic Development and Social Enterprise, Ann Phelan T.D. on 8th October 2015.

The Dr. Jim Mahon Library and Education Centre, which was part funded by the University of Limerick (UL), the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI), and the Health Service Executive, will embrace all aspects of medical education and continuing professional development. This new library also includes the amalgamation of two smaller healthcare libraries located within the Carlow/Kilkenny area.

It consists of:

- » Two tutorial rooms
- » Two seminar rooms
- » Extensive book and journal displays
- » Up to 40 reading spaces
- » eJournal/book access
- » Wi-Fi, video conferencing
- » Meeting areas and tutor offices

The library and education service will provide access for undergraduate / post graduate students in the health care service in addition to the many staff including doctors, nurses, professions allied to medicine and all other staff working in health service delivery (hospital and community) in Carlow/Kilkenny

to a comprehensive range of evidence-based, up-to-date knowledge resources.

Speaking at the event, Professor Michael Larvin, Head of UL's Graduate Entry Medical School, said:

"UL is thrilled to see the opening of this state-of-the-art educational facility, marking the continuation of the late Dr Jim Mahon's work commenced many years ago. He had the foresight to recognise the importance of continuing education for healthcare staff. Keeping 'up to date' is now recognised as a prerequisite to safe healthcare, and this modern learning hub will allow all healthcare professionals and our undergraduate students to avail of the latest technology to accomplish this. This has been a fruitful collaboration between UL and RCSI with St Luke's Hospital, and both of our medical schools look forward to seeing our students learn alongside other healthcare students and staff, in the same way that modern multi professional healthcare teams now work together. Both schools are very grateful for the quality of education and support that St Luke's staff provide for our students based here, which is reflected in the highly appreciative feedback they provide to us. We hope that St Luke's will continue to host both of streams of students in the longer term, and look forward to seeing the Dr Jim Mahon Library & Education Centre being fully utilised."

Oireachtas Joint Committee



Prof Colum Dunne at the Oireachtas

Prof Colum Dunne, GEMS Director of Research, was invited by the Chairman of the Joint Committee on Health and Children to appear before the Committee on Thursday 6th March 2015 to discuss the price of prescription drugs in Ireland. The discussion and supporting material used were generated by research completed and published by a GEMS team that included Prof Colum Dunne and Dr Suzanne Dunne.

On 1st October 2015, the Houses of the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Health & Children released a report on the Cost of Prescription Drugs in Ireland. Three of the 14 recommendations are based on the witness presentation statements of Professor Dunne to the Oireachtas, in which he described work carried out by Dr Suzanne Dunne in the GEMS. This is a concrete example of where GEMS research has influenced Irish Government Policy and impacted Health Services Delivery.



UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK
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Dr Maeve Leonard (Ryan) 1968-2015 — An Appreciation

Colleagues, students and the wider academic community both in the Mid-West and across the globe have all been touched by the untimely passing of **Dr Maeve Leonard-Ryan**.

The medical and academic communities in the Midwest have been saddened to learn of the recent untimely passing of **Dr Maire 'Maeve' Leonard-Ryan**.

Maeve was an immensely popular individual who straddled the worlds of clinical practice, teaching and research, thereby providing endless encouragement and inspiration to all she encountered.

Maeve was one of four children to Diarmuid and Dolores. She grew up in Limerick and was educated at the Crescent College before undertaking her undergraduate training at University College Galway, where she completed her studies in 1992 with an honours degree.

Psychiatry was her calling and she entered postgraduate training through the West of Ireland rotational scheme. She obtained the Membership of the Royal College of Psychiatrists at her first attempt in 1997 before moving to Queen's Medical Centre in Nottingham to undertake higher specialist training. Thereafter, she returned to Ireland in 2005 and completed her training at the Midwestern Regional Hospital.

Once aptly described as a 'tsunami of positivity', Maeve was immensely popular with her patients and colleagues and was seen as a dedicated and compassionate clinician. Over time, she became increasingly specialised in consultation-

liaison psychiatry, contributing her expert opinion to the care of thousands of patients at University Hospital Limerick and Milford Hospice over the decade following her return.

UL students

Maeve then undertook a crucial role in the establishment of the Graduate Entry Medical School in a variety of positions in the problem-based learning programme and clinical psychiatry. It was in this role as a teacher that she particularly excelled, maintaining a strong family tradition of pedagogy, and is remembered fondly for her remarkable capacity to bring out the best in others.

The first five cycles of medical graduates through UL were privileged to receive the bulk of their face-to-face teaching and mentoring from such a gifted teacher and she was repeatedly identified by them as an inspirational teacher and role model.

Along with colleagues in psychiatry across the region, Maeve produced a series of case-based teaching resources that form the mainstay of structured teaching for final-year medical students and which forms a textbook that will inevitably be completed by her colleagues.

Undoubtedly, across the globe patients under the care of her former students are benefiting from her dedicated and thoughtful teaching style, and her encouragement of their appreciation of mental illness and its treatment. Maeve will be remembered as one of the crucial champions of the medical school during its formative years.

Delirium research

All through this time, Maeve was a prolific researcher with a particular interest in neuropsychiatric symptoms in patients with severe physical illness. Her work in the field of delirium, which includes almost 50 peer-reviewed publications, contributed substantially to our understanding of how best to assess and manage symptoms of brain failure in hospitalised patients.

Maeve had a particular interest in managing neuropsychiatric disorders in palliative care patients, contributing some of her most highly cited work that frequently featured in journals such as the *British Medical Journal* and the *British Journal of Psychiatry*. She completed an MD at NUI Galway (2009) through these efforts.

Thereafter she progressed to supervise the Cognitive Impairment Research Team at UL where she was nicknamed 'Super Maeve' by her PhD students for her dedication and ability to melt mountains with her energy and determination.

The 'Leonard prize'

Maeve regularly presented her work at meetings across Europe and North America and has been an active contributor to the European Delirium Association during its decade of existence, and her considerable contribution to this field has been recognised in the establishment of the 'Leonard prize' for best new researcher at the annual EDA conference.

Similarly, her dedication to promoting academic effort at the Graduate Entry Medical School will be recognised in an annual prize for best new research at the annual Psychiatry study day.

Maeve is sorely missed by the many scientific colleagues that she developed across the globe but will undoubtedly be remembered for many years to come for her contributions to an understudied but important area of healthcare.

A devoted mother of three sons — Tom, Daire and John — and loving wife to Cathal, her untimely loss followed a brave and determined battle with illness. She passed away peacefully at Milford Hospice on September 10.

For those who had the pleasure of working alongside Maeve, it was a privilege to share space and time with such a committed altruist.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a hanam



EU RESTORE project comes to close at UL

L-R: Prof Alison Perry, Maria Manuela De Almeida Silva, Iftikhar ul Haq Khan, Marta Wilczynka, Prof Anne MacFarlane

The €2.9 million EU RESTORE project came to an end at UL in March 2015. Led by Professor Anne MacFarlane of the GEMS, the project involved research into implementation strategies to support patients of different origins and language background in a variety of European primary care settings.

As Europe is becoming increasingly multi-cultural, our healthcare systems must adapt to ensure that care is delivered in a manner which is sensitive to new and different cultural norms so that all service users receive appropriate and high quality care. The aim of the RESTORE project was to focus on the implementation of guidelines and/or training initiatives to support the use of professional interpreters and/or cultural mediators to aid communication in cross-cultural primary care consultations. The project had academic partners in Scotland, England, the Netherlands, Austria and Greece.

A final international RESTORE conference was held in GEMS on 26th-27th March 2015 titled 'Implementing migrant care initiatives, beyond language and cultural barriers'. It brought together

migrants, academics, primary care providers and policy makers to discuss research to improve communication in cross-cultural consultations. There was a specific focus on (1) highlighting the benefits of involving migrants in research about improving communication in primary care consultations and (2) identifying key recommendations to improve national and international policy.

The conference began with a plenary session that includes migrants outlining their own difficulties, describing consultations with their GPs or primary care nurses and how language barriers and cultural differences effect these interactions. Migrants living in Ireland and England also described their experiences of being involved in the RESTORE research project.

Also participating were representatives from the World Health Organisation, the Council of Europe and the International Organisation for Migration. This has led to further collaborations with the WHO Regional Office for Europe, with regard to continuing the dissemination of the RESTORE findings.

GEMS Year 1 2014-2015

Year 1 students at GEMS pictured in the foyer of the GEMS building at the beginning of the 2014/15 academic year.



GEMS Year 1 2015-2016

Year 1 students at GEMS pictured in the foyer of the GEMS building at the beginning of the 2015/16 academic year.



US visits October 2015



Left to Right: Sharon Nolan, Dr. Karen Wei-Ru Lin Assistant Dean, Global Health (Rutgers), Emmeline Searson, Prof Colum Dunne, Prof Deirdre McGrath, Dr. Martha H. Lansing, Associate Professor and Vice Chair, Department of Family Medicine and Community Health (Rutgers), Dr. Javier Escobar, Dean, Global Health (Rutgers) Dr. Alfred Tallia Professor and Chair, Department of Family Medicine and Community Health Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, New Brunswick, New Jersey.



Left to Right: Dr. Javier Escobar Dean, Global Health (Rutgers), Prof Deirdre McGrath, Emmeline Searson, Sharon Nolan, Dr. Karen Wei-Ru Lin Assistant Dean Global Health (Rutgers).

A group from UL GEMS travelled to the US in October 2015 to strengthen relationships with the US medical schools. The group consisting of Prof Deirdre McGrath Director of Education, Prof Colum Dunne Director of Research, Sharon Nolan School Manager and Emmeline Searson International Liaison Officer

travelled to Rutgers University, Harvard Medical School, Upstate Medical University and Baystate Medical Centre. These visits build on the goals of the new UL strategic plan, Broadening Horizons 2015-19.

University of Limerick Graduate Entry Medical School Hosts 8th Annual Scientific Meeting of Irish Network of Medical Educators (INMED), February 18-20th 2015

By Professor Deirdre McGrath, Conference Chair, GEMS Director of Education



Photo L-R: Prof Tara Fenwick, Dr Jonathan Silverman, Prof Deirdre McGrath GEMS Director of Education, Prof Mike Larvin, Prof Peter Cantillon (President INMED) and Prof Don Barry (President UL)

In February, the University of Limerick Graduate Entry Medical School hosted over 100 delegates representing students and faculty from health sciences and medical schools and post graduate training bodies across the island of Ireland for the 8th Annual Scientific Meeting of INMED. The title of the conference was "New horizons in health professional education: Complexity, Culture and Communication".

The shifting emphasis in health professions education toward workplace as opposed to classroom education has revealed the inherent complexities of apprenticeship learning and represents an important shift in health professional education research. How we make sense of complexity and how we use the knowledge to create better learning environments for undergraduate and postgraduate learners were discussed at INMED 2015.

We were honoured to have such internationally renowned speakers such as Dr Jonathan Silverman (University of Cambridge and President of the European Association for Communication in Healthcare) who spoke about the conditions needed for healthcare trainees to develop their communication skills, Professor Tara Fenwick, Professor of Professional Education, Stirling University, who spoke about the complexity in the professional learning environment and Dr Anne Marie Cunningham, Cardiff University, who spoke about the use of social media by medical students today and the need for educators to embrace these tools and the importance of digital professionalism.

GEMS Students ran what was a very thought provoking workshop on the "Benefits and barriers to the introduction of traditional, complementary and alternative medicine (TCAM) modalities and teaching into allopathic medical education".



Photo L-R: Professor Peter Cantillon (President INMED), GEMS students Niall Tuohy, Nicola Kuhlmann, Ciara Hennessy, Martin Mroue, Anne Hermon & Professor Deirdre McGrath.

PRIZE WINNERS:

Poster prize: Dr Laoise Griffin and team from UL GEMS Do, Review, Learn, Apply: inter-led teaching, analysis of a case based approach

Student prize: CW Ahern and team from UCD A novel mind-map slide-show hybrid for the standardised, interactive and graphical presentation of pathology topics

Oral presentation: Simon O'Hare from the Medical Council of Ireland Can trainees view D-RECT quality improvement of postgraduate training in Ireland?

Clinical Placement Electives, students' perspective:

Two UL students Laura Greene and Dermot Murphy pursued a 4 week mini fellowship in the Rothman Institute in Thomas Jefferson Philadelphia over the summer of 2014. Laura and Dermot both graduated at the conferring ceremony in June 2015.

Laura Greene's experience:

"I pursued a mini-fellowship in the Research department of the Rothman Institute in Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia for a four week period in June of last summer. This was a fantastic opportunity for a medical student such as myself to get involved with research projects in a highly productive and internationally well-respected institute. The research department is made up of a friendly and motivated international team of research fellows, clinical researchers, database co-ordinators, statisticians and medical students, all working alongside one another. As a result of this fellowship,

I'm involved with two research papers which, upon completion, are both likely to be submitted to high-impact journals. This fellowship provides a unique opportunity to be part of the very research that serves to improve current orthopaedic surgical practices and management with the possibility of having your own name attached to these wide-reaching publications. This was a wonderful experience which was made possible by the Department of Orthopaedics in the Midlands Regional Hospital Tullamore and one I would highly recommend."

Dermot Murphy's experience:

"Many different areas of orthopaedics are covered, including hip, knee, spine, and shoulder. There are medical researchers from all over the world working there. Before I went, I had little experience or knowledge of orthopaedic surgery, or orthopaedic research, but the time spent there was enjoyable and very enlightening.

I became involved with two interesting projects which upon completion will be submitted to professional journals. This is an opportunity to strengthen one's CV while also gaining invaluable research skills.

I found everyone at the Institute to be both welcoming and helpful. The Institute is known all around the world as a leader in orthopaedics. It was a fantastic opportunity to spend time with some of the surgeons and researchers who have established the reputation of the Institute. As well as the research I participated in, I was given the opportunity to attend orthopaedic surgeries.

The city of Philadelphia is historic and lively. The Institute is located in the centre of the city and near to Thomas Jefferson University Hospital. There are sporting events, historical monuments, cultural and musical events taking place regularly which provide great ways to spend leisure time."

A summer with Paramedic Studies.....

By Alexandrine Martineau, Year 2 Medical student, GEMS



Clockwise from left: Alexandrine Martineau (Student), Jennifer Fitzgerald, Mark Dixon, Rachel Connaughton (Paramedic Studies).

This summer I completed an 8 weeks studentship with the Paramedics Studies department at the University of Limerick. My internship involved being part of the research team looking at better understanding the physiological responses in paramedic drivers involved in Blue Light driving. This was an exciting project to take on. I was thrilled that I was able to get involved at the early stages of the project, particularly as I was able to help in the study's design using knowledge I had acquired in my first year at GEMS.

Unlike other research projects which involved a heavy emphasis on lab work, this project was much more hands on, such as helping plan and assemble the ambulance simulator, which was something I really enjoyed and offered a nice balance of theory and practicality.

The project provided multiple opportunities for me to develop skills that I will now carry with me through my academic and professional career. I built new relationships with other GEMS faculty members and I improved my interpersonal skills through interacting with the studies participants. I also got the amazing opportunity to shadow an evening shift with the staff of Ennis Ambulance Station and the highlight of my studentship; to take part in a pre-hospital GP training day involving a tour of an ambulance helicopter!

Paramedic Studies went over and beyond what would have been required. They looked for opportunities for me to grow as well as opportunities for my involvement in the future. I would strongly recommend a GEMS Summer Studentship programme with the Paramedic Studies Office to any other keen researcher, an amazing team I have been privileged to work with. I leave this opportunity with new contacts, co-workers and friends!

Anaesthesia Prize 2015



Photo L-R: Dr Pat Dillon, Consultant Anaesthetist, University Hospital Limerick and GEMS Student Fabio Margiotta.

Year 3 GEMS student Fabio Margiotta was awarded the Undergraduate Prize in Anaesthesia and Perioperative Medicine for his essay on "Communication in the Perioperative Period" at the Sylvester O'Halloran scientific meeting on March 7th 2015.

The annual Undergraduate Prize in Anaesthesia and Perioperative Medicine has been developed in conjunction with the Department of Anaesthesia and Perioperative Medicine at University Hospital Limerick.

Adjunct Faculty Research Awards



Pictured L to R: Prof Colum Dunne, Dr Brian Casserly and Dr Liam Glynn (who accepted on behalf of Dr Fergus Glynn)

The Annual Adjunct Faculty Research Awards were presented by Professor Colum Dunne, Director of Research, during the annual GEMS appreciation dinner which was held at the Dunraven Arms Hotel in Adare Co. Limerick on 8th June 2015. The recipients of this year's awards were: Dr Brian Casserly and Dr Fergus Glynn.

GEMS Research Award News



Miranda Kiernan PhD Student

At the UHL Research Symposium held in the Strand Hotel Limerick on 9th October 2015, Miranda Kiernan, a GEMS PhD student, gained the prize for best presentation for her abstract titled, "Relationship of mesenteric disease manifestations in Crohn's disease with mucosal and systemic manifestations". Miranda is supervised jointly by Professor Calvin Coffey and Professor Colum Dunne.



Graduation day for the class of 2015
at the GEMS – graduation ceremony
held in June 2015

GEMS Postgraduate Graduations in 2015

Winter Conferring January 2015

The University of Limerick's Winter Conferring took place in January 2015 where Dr Suzanne Dunne and Dr Rachel McEvoy were conferred. Dr Dunne is the first PhD candidate to have completed PhD research initiated at GEMS.



Pictured above L to R: Dr Suzanne Dunne, Prof Michael Larvin,
Dr Rachel McEvoy

Autumn Conferring August 2015

The University's Autumn Conferring ceremony on August 27th saw four more GEMS PhD candidates and one MD candidate awarded their degrees. The graduates on the day were: Dr Shane Knox, Dr Martina O'Reilly, Dr Dorothy Leahy, Dr John Cooke (who all graduated with PhDs) and Dr Keith Quintyne (who graduated with a MD).



Pictured L to R: Prof Walter Cullen, Prof Colum Dunne, Dr Shane Knox, Dr Martina O'Reilly, Prof Michael Larvin, Dr Dorothy Leahy, Dr John Cooke, Prof David Meagher and Prof Paul Finucane

Partnership for Health Equity (PHE)

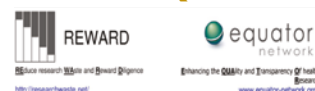


Left to Right: Prof Alison Perry Dean EHS UL, Jan O'Sullivan TD, Maurice Hoare HSE, Dr Patrick O'Donnell UL GEMS.

The **Partnership for Health Equity** established two pilot primary healthcare clinics for marginalised groups in Limerick city in April 2014. The Minister for Education and Skills Jan O'Sullivan TD visited the service to mark the first year in operation and to acknowledge the work being carried out. Dr Patrick O'Donnell, Clinical Fellow in Social Inclusion at UL GEMS, runs the clinics at two locations; the Ana Liffey Drug Project at the Fairgreen and at the St Vincent DePaul Drop-in Centre on Hartstonge Street. The clinics aim to improve access to primary healthcare for groups such as the homeless, drug users, migrants and others who have difficulties in availing of primary care in the city. From these locations Dr O'Donnell works with many of the statutory and voluntary services and he visits many homeless hostels across the city. Dr O'Donnell has had over 900 consultations with marginalised patients since opening. The clinics also serve as a site for research and teaching on the healthcare of marginalised groups.

Speaking after visiting the clinic at the St Vincent DePaul Drop-in Centre Minister for Education and Skills Jan O'Sullivan TD said: "The clinic is reaching out to vulnerable people who may otherwise not receive the advice and care they need. Dr. O'Donnell and his partners in this initiative are making a real difference in people's lives.... This work has ensured that the service is accessible and appropriate to the needs of vulnerable people."

The Inaugural REWARD/EQUATOR Conference, Edinburgh, 2015



Increasing value and reducing waste in biomedical research conference

Maurice O'Connell, GEMS PhD student, working with Prof John Forbes, received a 2015 Health Research Board Trials Research Methodology Network scholarship to attend the 'REWARD-EQUATOR' conference, held in Edinburgh on September 28th-30th 2015. <http://researchwaste.net/research-wasteequator-conference/>

The conference reviewed the progress made by researchers, funders, regulators, publishers, industry and research users against The Lancet Research Waste series findings and recommendations, <http://www.thelancet.com/series/research>. A draft consensus statement highlighted that research potential is maximized when

- » the right research priorities are set;
- » robust research design, conduct and analysis is used;
- » regulation and management are proportionate to risks;
- » all information on research methods and findings are accessible;
- » reports of research are complete and usable.

The conference also acknowledged that there is "a responsibility not just to seek to advance knowledge, but also to advance the practice of research itself."

Ireland's Emergency Aeromedical Service made Permanent



Emergency Aeromedical Service with Cathal O'Donnell, Medical Director for the National Ambulance Service.

An Emergency Aeromedical Service (EAS) was provisionally introduced in Ireland in June 2012. The National Ambulance Service and the Air Corps have since been operating the pilot scheme with the back-up support of the Irish Coast Guard. From the inception of the EAS, the Centre for Prehospital Research has been conducting a research study to determine the feasibility of a permanent Air Ambulance in Ireland. Preliminary findings from CPR contributed to a larger report submitted to the Minister for Health on the future of

the service. On the 15th of July 2015 the Ministers for Defence and Health, Simon Coveney and **Leo Varadkar** announced the establishment of the EAS on a permanent basis. Dr. Varadkar commented "The service has been great for patients and ensures that those in remoter areas, particularly in the west, have timely access to specialised treatment available in the larger hospitals. A third of the missions were in response to STEMI heart attacks, allowing patients to be treated in a specialist setting within 90 minutes of diagnosis".

Symposium on "Healthcare Education in a Diverse Society: Educators Needs"



Pictured L to R: Dr Yoga Nathan, Mr Alphonse Basogomba, Dr Ger Lane, Prof Deirdre McGrath

The Graduate Entry Medical School (GEMS) hosted a seminar for educators and students on healthcare education in a diverse society on Oct 1st 2015. This was carried out as part of the dissemination phase of a European wide study called the C2ME (Culturally Competent in Medical Education) project which has been ongoing for the last two years.

The project aims to support medical teachers themselves to become more proficient in cultural competence education and to develop a policy for the effective implementation of programmes cultural competence education in medical curricula. Medical teachers and medical school leadership are the main target groups of C2ME. For the purposes of this project cultural competence is defined as a set of congruent knowledge, attitudes and skills of health care professionals to provide high quality of care to patients with diverse socio-cultural backgrounds.

UL GEMS was the only Irish institution among the 12 European and one North American collaborating medical schools involved in this project.

The C2ME group has developed tools for medical schools and educators to use to assess their curricula and teaching for issues of cultural competence. The results of these various strands of the research will be published in the coming months and training modules are currently being developed.

The seminar was addressed by:

- » Professor Deirdre McGrath – Director of Education and the UL GEMS lead on the C2ME project
- » Mr Alphonse Basogomba – Chairman of Intercultural and Diversity Education Centre Ireland
- » Dr Ger Lane – a medical educator and GP with extensive experience in cross cultural consultation
- » Dr Yoga Nathan, Senior Lecturer in Public Health, UL GEMS

The C2ME project is funded with the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union (2013-2015).

For further information please see:
www.amc.nl/web/Research/Overview/Major-projects-and-collaborations/Culturally-Competent-in-Medical-Education/Culturally-Competent-in-Medical-Education/Project-C2ME.htm

The Health Equity Program

The Health Equity Program (HEP) is a dynamic new project developed by medical students from the Graduate Entry Medical School (GEMS) at the University of Limerick. In only one year, HEP has grown from 15 to nearly 90 first and second year medical students with guidance from Professor Anne MacFarlane, Dr. Patrick O'Donnell and the Partnership for Health Equity (PHE). In 2014, HEP started as a small team of medical students who were passionate to learn more about patients affected by homelessness, drug & alcohol addiction and immigration. Medical students were determined to engage directly with marginalised patients and soon started shadowing health care providers who dedicate their practice to treating Limerick's most vulnerable. As a group, HEP is working hard to place as many medical students as possible with the HSE Homeless Action Team (HAT) and the Ana Liffey Drug Project. In particular, Dr. Patrick O'Donnell who devotes his time to treating patients experiencing addiction and homelessness, has been teaching medical students how to develop a supportive relationship and how to be mindful and attentive to their needs. Additionally, he is demonstrating how important it is for a doctor to do more than simply prescribe medicine. One student explained, "During my observership [shadowing], I met with one girl (approximately the same age as myself) struggling with a heroin addiction. Her unfortunate circumstances made me aware of my own privileged circumstances and further helped me see the importance of serving the disadvantaged community." The medical students who run HEP hope that with a greater awareness of marginalised patients, students will be inspired to become more than a doctor, but to also become a compassionate advocate for their community.



UL GEMS Medical students at Health Equity Program team meeting

UL GEMS signs MOU with leading US Medical School

The University of Limerick has signed a Memorandum of Understanding between its Graduate Entry Medical School (GEMS) and one of North America's leading comprehensive medical schools, the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. Located in New Brunswick, New Jersey and part of Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School encompasses 20 basic science and clinical departments, hosts centres and institutes including the Cardiovascular Institute, the Child Health Institute of New Jersey, the Center for Advanced Biotechnology and Medicine, the Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute, and the Stem Cell Institute of New Jersey. The medical school maintains educational programs at the undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate levels on its campuses in New Brunswick and Piscataway and provides continuing education courses for health care professionals and community education programs. In addition, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School has 34 other hospital affiliates and ambulatory care sites throughout the region.

The agreement will facilitate the exchange of undergraduate and postgraduate students studying Medicine between both institutions. It will open up opportunities for

UL medical students to study overseas as part of their programme at GEMS. It is also hoped to develop research collaboration.

There is an added dimension to this new agreement as Limerick and New Brunswick are sister cities, linked by direct flights daily between Newark and Shannon airports. This agreement is particularly important for the city of Limerick as it builds on relationships initiated through Limerick City and County Council and the City of New Brunswick. Key in the development of the emerging relationship were Eugene Griffin at Limerick City & County Council, and Professor Bill Shannon, UL GEMS Director of International Liaison.

The agreement was signed on behalf of UL by Professor Paul McCutcheon, Vice-President Academic & Registrar, he commented: "The University is moving forward later this year with its new 5 year Strategic Plan, 'Broadening Horizons', one of whose aims is to further strengthen the institution's international profile. This MOU presents exciting opportunities for co-operation, not only of benefit to both medical schools, but also for wider collaboration between our Universities." The MOU was signed during an official visit to UL by leading faculty at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, including



L-R Professor Javier Escobar Associate Dean for Global Health (Rutgers), Emmeline Searson GEMS International, Prof Paul McCutcheon VPA&R, Eugene Griffin Limerick City & County Council, Professor Vicente Gracias Medical School Dean (Rutgers), Christy O'Connor Limerick City & County Council, Professor Michael Larvin Head of the GEMS, Sharon Nolan GEMS School Manager.

Professor Javier Escobar, Associate Dean for Global Health and Professor Vicente Gracias, Medical School Dean and Chief Executive for the Robert Wood Johnson Hospital group. Commenting on this new agreement, Professor Michael Larvin, Head of the GEMS, said, 'We are delighted to have concluded this new agreement with Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and Rutgers University. We are all looking forward to developing the relationship between both institutions, and to realising the significant opportunities this offers both our students and research staff.'

GEMS play a major role in hosting 36th Annual World Medical & Health Games

UL hosted the 36th Annual World Medical & Health Games from 19th to 25th July 2015 for the second time, having previously hosted them in 1995. More than 700 healthcare professionals participated, many bringing their families who participated in parallel competitions including the 'Kidigames' bringing the total to more than 2,000 guests. It is estimated that this brought around €2m of tourism revenue into our region. More than 23 individual and team sports were provided on campus and nearby. The games commenced with athletes marching from the GEMS building over the Living bridge to the opening ceremony held in the University Concert Hall. Minister for Education, Jan O'Sullivan TD, formally opened the games. The GEMS hosted a 2 days Sport Medicine symposium in French and English, co-chaired by Prof Mike Larvin, in which Professor Phil Jakeman from PESS was a keynote speaker. GEMS Year 2 and former PESS student Niall Tuohy, also a track athlete competing at international level, spoke and acted as UL student ambassador. Niall was interviewed about combining athletics with being a medical student during Limerick Live95FM's live outside broadcast from the Medigames. Niall

is currently taking time away from the course to prepare for the Rio Olympics in 2016. GEMS staff, clinical adjuncts and students also participated, winning many medals. Notable highlights included Dr James O'Hare winning Gold in the 100m, Maurice O'Connell winning Silver in the 3000m and Bronze in the 800m, Dr Patrick O'Donnell winning Silver for 400m freestyle swimming as well as two bronze medals, Niall Collins winning Silver for Mountain Biking, Prof Henry O'Connell winning Gold for the Half-Marathon, Prof David Meagher winning Gold in the Triathlon Sprint, GP Dr Majella Scanlan winning Silver in the Sprint triathlon. A major triumph for the GEMS came with the Tag Rugby competition, in which GEMS staff and student teams winning both Gold and Silver, as well as forming half of the team winning the Bronze medal! The winner's trophy is now proudly displayed in the GEMS refreshment room. The athletes closing ceremony was led by Councillor Shane Clifford, Deputy Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick. Many of our participants are considering taking part in the 37th Medigames, due to be held in Maribor, an alpine town in Slovenia, May 28th to June 4th 2016.



Pictured at the launch of the Medigames: Sharon McMeel, UL Project Manager; Pierre Lusinchi CEO CSO; Minister Jan O'Sullivan TD; Linda Stevens, UL Director of Special Projects; Jennifer Churchwood, Major Events Fáilte Ireland; Adam Skerrett Business & Events Tourism Manager; Michael Foley COO UL Campus Life Services; Karen Brosnahan Manager of the Shannon Conference & Sports Bureau; Jérémie Roualet, Marketing & Communication Manager, Professor Mike Larvin, Head of GEMS.



The 36th World Medical and Health Games was officially opened by Minister Jan O'Sullivan TD at the University of Limerick on Sunday 19th July.



The GEMS tag rugby team in action at the Pavilion complex.