

Linking Teaching and Learning to Practice and Policy

by Michelle Murnane and Lisa Murphy

The Graduate Entry Medical School recently held a Symposium for affiliated Clinical Tutors in General Practice on ‘Linking Teaching and Learning to Practice and Policy’. As part of this Symposium, a workshop highlighted practical ways in which involvement in teaching-related activity can benefit a practice, especially as health policy further drives care being provided in general practice.

Over 40 GPs from counties Limerick, Kerry, Clare, Tipperary, Waterford, Cork, Carlow, Kilkenny and Dublin attended an interactive session demonstrating the innovative ways in which GEMS teaches clinical skills to medical students. The session commenced with a short presentation that described the format and teaching methods used to deliver physical skills, procedural skills and communication skills, followed by an interactive demonstration of how we teach specific clinical skills. Four clinical skills tutors, all of whom are GPs and in clinical practice in Counties Limerick and Kerry, each delivered a 20-minute ‘snap-shot’ of how we teach four different skills. In keeping with the theme of the day, skills which are key to the care of patients with chronic illnesses, especially

diabetes, were the focus of this session. Using traditional and newer diagnostic approaches, Drs. Mary Roche, Louise Crowley, Nuala Barry and Andrew O'Regan therefore demonstrated blood pressure measurement, ophthalmoscopy, peripheral vascular examination and peripheral nerve examination, respectively. The session, which was planned in response to suggestions by GP Tutors, was appreciated and enjoyed by those who attended. Specifically, the majority of GPs who attended agreed it helped them identify practical ways in which involvement in teaching-related activity can benefit a practice, understand how medical students are taught clinical skills and reflect on how teaching clinical skills might benefit patient care. The overall smooth running of the session was in no small part due to our excellent Clinical Skills’ technical team which includes Dr. Margaret Toomey, Dr. Elizabeth Guihen and Orla Sheehy. The Symposium, which also featured seminars on ‘Clinical Audit’ by Professor Ailish Hannigan and ‘Diabetes: Planned Initiatives, Likely Challenges and Possible Solutions’ (see elsewhere in newsletter) was the final of three workshops held for Clinical Tutors in General Practice in Academic Year 2011-12.

Surgery at the Graduate Entry Medical School was delighted to host Dr. Ian Lavery from 29th February to March 3rd



A graduate of the University of Queensland, Dr Lavery trained at Princess Alexandra Hospital in Queensland as well as Repatriation General Hospital in Melbourne. He undertook his Colorectal Fellowship at the Cleveland Clinic under Rupert B. Turnbull, M.D. and was appointed to the staff of the Cleveland Clinic in 1976. Dr. Lavery subsequently worked on staff at the Department of Colorectal Surgery in Cleveland until the present day. Working with Dr. Victor Fazio and James Church he was involved in the transformation of the Colorectal Department into what is arguably the preeminent colorectal surgical department worldwide. During this period he was crucial in the transformation of the Cleveland Clinic itself into one of the top medical institutes in North America. J Calvin Coffey, Professor of Surgery, UL and organiser of the Annual Surgical Lecture said; “Dr. Lavery’s visit to the Mid-Western region and to the students at UL represented

a wonderful educational opportunity. Dr. Lavery mentored several Chairs of Surgery worldwide and continues to inspire Irish and other surgeons.” With the recent establishment of the Graduate Entry Medical School at UL together with the development of the Gastrointestinal Surgery, HSE Mid-Western Region (involving Professor J Calvin Coffey, Mr David Waldron, and Mr Eoghan Condon) service delivery and research in this field has been greatly strengthened. The relationship between the Graduate Entry Medical School, University of Limerick, the HSE Mid-Western Regional Department of Surgery and the Cleveland Clinic has been further developed through multiple collaborations in several research projects and is set to continue to generate benefits for medical education and surgery in the Mid-West of Ireland. These developments are reflected in the Dr. Lavery’s taking part in numerous activities during his visit. He spent Thursday morning talking to GEMS students as well as postgraduate surgical trainees giving advice on surgical education and training in North America and indeed internationally. He subsequently joined the gastrointestinal multidisciplinary meeting after which he visited the UL campus. On Thursday evening Dr. Lavery delivered a state of the art lecture on surgical training, education and mentoring over the past thirty years. Over Friday and Saturday he took part in the Sylvester O’Halloran Surgical Scientific Symposium meeting.

Congratulations!

Dr Shane O’Hanlon, Clinical Fellow in Medicine has been awarded a scholarship to the Canadian Summer Program in Ageing Research. Five researchers in Ireland have been chosen to attend this international event in Vancouver that aims to increase research networking opportunities and support the careers of researchers in ageing.

News & Events

- GEMS Conferring Ceremony is taking place on June 12th 2012
- GEMS is hosting the Irish Network of Medical Educators (INMED) Symposium in October 2012
- GEMS is delighted to welcome our new Chair of Medicine, Prof. Austin Stack who joined us in 2012
- GEMS has a successful visit from the Medical Council Monitoring Team in April 19th
- The GEMS building is finally near to completion and will be in use for the start of the 1012/13 academic year. The building will be simply magnificent and worth waiting for.
- Contractual problems have delayed the commencement of work on the new Clinical Education & Research Centre (CERC) on the Dooradoyle site. The GEMS and the HSE are optimistic that work will begin on this project before the end of the year.

GEMS Staff

Comings:

- Ms Anne Murphy joined GEMS in November as Administrative Officer
- Ms Laoise Hogan joined GEMS in April as Administrative Office
- Dr Damien Ryan has taken over from Dr. Cathal O'Donnell as Director of the Centre for Pre-Hospital Research (CPR) within the GEMS. The GEMS wishes Dr O'Donnell well in his new role as Medical Director of the National Ambulance Service.

Goings:

- Mr Mark Dixon has left the GEMS to move to UCD where he will be responsible for the establishment of a BSc degree programme in Paramedic Science. The GEMS wishes Mark every success in his new role. UCD's gain is very much the GEMS's loss.
- Ms Mary Gamble retired from GEMS in March and will be greatly missed by her very many friends within the GEMS and its affiliated hospitals. The contribution that Mary made to the establishment of the school would be impossible to overstate.
- Ms Sarah Clear left the GEMS earlier this year and has moved to West Cork. The GEMS wishes her the very best in her new role of saving the environment.



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GRADUATE ENTRY MEDICAL SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Welcome to Prof. Michael Larvin



Professor Michael Larvin joins GEMS in August as successor to Professor Paul Finucane, Foundation Head of GEMS. He has been Foundation Professor of Surgery at the University of Nottingham

Graduate Entry Medical School since 2002. He previously worked at the Universities of Leeds and London, Ulm (Germany), and in the USA where he first encountered graduate entry medicine, and he gained a research Doctorate and education Masters along the way. His clinical and research experience lies in pancreatic disease, metabolism

and minimally invasive (keyhole) surgery, including operations for severe obesity. His educational interests include technology enhanced learning, both e-learning and immersive simulation. The Nottingham GEM course began in 2003 and is similar to the UL GEMS course, with emphasis on problem based learning, teamwork and professionalism, and clinical attachments dispersed across a large regional network of general practices and hospitals. Prof. Larvin has been an enthusiastic PBL facilitator, admissions tutor, research supervisor and hospital teaching lead, and managed the merged GEM and 5 year clinical phase through a successful medical council review. Over the last four years he has also been Director of Education at the Royal College of Surgeons of England, Director of the NHS eLibrary for Surgery, Theatres and Intensive Care and national clinical champion for surgical eLearning for the UK Department of Health. His personal philosophy is that medical education should be challenging but enjoyable, both for students and for those who teach and inspire them. His experience of graduate entry medicine has been very positive, and he believes that it has enriched medical education with graduates entering courses who are already

thoughtful, caring and highly committed learners, possessed of many personal skills that took his own generation many years to develop. Prof Larvin is hoping to build on the solid foundations already established at UL GEMS, strengthening further the vital relationships with GPs, hospital specialists and post-graduate trainees and other UL schools and faculties, in both teaching and research. He is confident that the interaction of the medical school with local clinicians, health service managers and scientists offers huge potential for improvements in patient care, particularly at a time when austerity is leading a drive for improved benefits at reduced costs. He and his wife Keyna, a teacher and semi-professional singer, are of Irish heritage and greatly looking forward to moving to the Mid-West this summer with the youngest of their five children. His hobbies are shared with the family and include music and sports, which he notes are particularly well supported at UL. He feels privileged to be joining UL GEMS at such an exciting time, with the opening of the new medical school building on a beautiful campus with excellent facilities, and a dynamic, fast-growing University that places the student learning experience firmly at the top of its agenda.

Milking Cows in Ballinasloe

I spent three months in Ballinasloe during my final year for my medicine and surgery rotations. I have to admit, it was a bit of a culture shock moving to Ballinasloe. Although I have been living in Ireland for the past three years, I have been located in Limerick, a city center. I arrived in Ballinasloe on Sunday night after spending three months in Vancouver for electives. I rented a room from a dairy farmer and his wife and woke up on my first day of work to a view of cows and horses from my window. For a Canadian, this wasn't something I would see everyday. It was amazing! On arrival at Portiuncla hospital in Ballinasloe I was taken aback by all the friendly hospital workers who greeted me with “Hello” and “Good morning”. Did they know me? This certainly never happened in Vancouver. I never had to ask for directions because there was always someone keen to offer help. When I decided to explore the town it didn't take long because there are only two main streets. A post office, the Gardaí, a few pubs and, of course, four SuperMacs. I started to wonder – how will I survive here? It didn't take long to integrate into the group of ten UL students then on placement. Everyone was welcoming and I was struck because they had all formed this

unique bond because they were isolated from their previous lives. Every birthday was celebrated with cake, balloons, brownies, and a party. There were even baked goods for no occasion. So yes, there is always a party in Ballinasloe! The patients at the hospital were all very approachable and receptive to interacting with students. Our tutor and the doctors went out of their way to teach us and even the nurses learned our names! So how did I end up milking cows? Since many of the patients I was exposed to were farmers, I thought I should probably see what farming was all about. A friend of mine lives near Ballinasloe on a dairy farm with her parents and I visited her a few times for dinner. Those cows need to be milked twice a day – that's hard work. So I decided to help out!



Kristin and one of her new charges in Ballinasloe

HSE announces national diabetes plans at GEMS

The HSE views integrated diabetes care as a priority and general practice is key to making this happen. This was the key message at a seminar on ‘Planned Initiatives for Diabetes Care in Ireland’ held recently by the Graduate Entry Medical School at UL in conjunction with the HSE. Speaking at GEMS, HSE National Lead for Diabetes, Dr. Diarmuid Smith, highlighted how the HSE’s recently developed model for diabetes care prioritises podiatry, the care of children with diabetes and integrated care and identified an implementation strategy which recognises the importance of partnership with key stakeholders. ‘This is a complex issue and in developing our model we have been fortunate to have the active involvement of general practice, public health, podiatry and paediatrics.’ In response to Dr. Smith’s overview of national strategy, Dr. Mai Mannix, Specialist in Public Health Medicine (HSE Midwest) further highlighted the importance of public health information systems and strategies in preventing and managing chronic illnesses.

The meeting thus highlighted how regional and national information systems and community based multidisciplinary teams will be central to the implementation of the HSE’s Programme for Diabetes Care. Limerick GP and Adjunct Senior Lecturer at UL, Dr. Ray O’Connor, presented preliminary findings from the HSE / UL ‘Diabetes in General Practice Pilot Study’ which highlighted strong support from the general practice community for structured diabetes

care, the importance of educational and clinical supports and further research to examine the process of diabetes care in general practice through clinical audit, at this time of reform. We can be encouraged for two reasons: Firstly, the HSE has a clear plan for diabetes care that is in line with international best practice and which recognises the central role of multidisciplinary and community based care. Secondly, considerable enthusiasm and support exists within general practice and public health in the Midwest and other regions to making this plan happen.’

Sincere thanks to colleagues Jennifer Fitzgerald and Michelle Murnane for organising this important meeting.



Dr. Walter Cullen, Professor of General Practice, UL-GEMS

From sudden adult death syndrome to diabetes – prize winning student research

The third year medical students presented their research/audit projects on April 11th and 12th 2012. The projects were coordinated by Prof. Ailish Hannigan, GEMS with support from Dr. Avril Hegarty, Dept. of Mathematics and Statistics. Students were supervised by general practitioners, faculty and clinicians associated with the GEMS. There were 80 projects in total, half of which were based in general practice with the remainder in a hospital or university setting. A wide variety of projects were presented including investigating the factors causing delays in emergency departments, the prediction of outcomes in colon cancer, auditing the quality and appropriateness of referrals from general practitioners, a qualitative study of patient knowledge regarding their medications, a case control study involving patients with severe mental illness in general practice and a survey of awareness of men’s health issues in UL.

Four projects received a special commendation: Carolyne Lemieux’s project on cardiac pathology – an underlying factor in sudden death in young persons aged 15-35 in Ireland supervised by Dr. Elizabeth Mulcahy, Mid-Western Regional Hospital, Limerick and Dr. Marie Cassidy, Office of State Pathology, Dublin.

Noreen Moloney’s project on adherence to prescribed medication among diabetics supervised by Dr. James O’Hare, Mid-Western Regional Hospital, Limerick. Anna Neary’s project auditing gastrointestinal endoscopic biopsies of limited or no clinical value supervised by Dr. Nor, Midlands Regional Hospital. Tom Nolis’s project on the appropriateness of aspirin as primary prevention treatment in general practice using Framingham cardiovascular disease risk assessment scores supervised by Dr. Michael Griffin, St. John’s Square, Limerick.



Pictured above are (L to R): Anna Neary and Noreen Moloney (back row); Avril Hegarty, Carolyne Lemieux, Ailish Hannigan and Tom Nolis (front row).

Important medical archive donated to University of Limerick library



The Glucksman Library and Graduate Entry Medical School at the University of Limerick has welcomed the recent donation of an archive of the doctors’ newspaper Medicine Weekly. Almost 25 hard- bound volumes of the award-winning publication, which was distributed between 1997 and 2009, were presented to the GEMS Librarian and her colleagues with academics in Limerick recently by the M+C Group, a Dublin-based medical marketing agency. Dr Walter Cullen, Professor of General Practice at UL Graduate Entry Medical School, said the newspaper’s publication coincided with an important period in the history of Irish healthcare.

He added: “This archive will be an important resource for students both at GEMS and across UL, especially health sciences, business / marketing and journalism. We are deeply grateful both to the M+C Group for their generosity and to Ms Donna Ó Doibhlin and her colleagues in the Glucksman Library who have found a home for this important archive. “The founding editor of Medicine Weekly, Robert Love – who now works with the M+C Group – presented staff in Limerick with the archive. “For more than a decade, the publication showcased the work of some excellent journalists. It also offered many members of the Irish medical profession an opportunity to actively contribute to healthcare debate.

Many of these individuals continue to make telling contributions to the national discourse on medical affairs in medical newspapers, national press and other media.”

Pictured at the archive’s presentation were Dolores Whelan, Glucksman Library, Yoga Vellupailai, GEMS, Liz Dore, Glucksman Library, Micheal O hAodha, Glucksman Library, Pattie Punch, Glucksman Library, Judy Carmody, Glucksman Library, Robert Love, Donor, Donna Ó Doibhlin, GEMS Librarian and Professor Walter Cullen, GEMS.

UL Medical Research Forum highlights essential ingredients for successful clinical research

UL Medical Research Forum explores topics from cancer cell biology to music therapy, clinical therapies to medical law. The University of Limerick recently welcomed leading researcher in Primary Care Research and Professor of General Practice at RCSI, Tom Fahey, who delivered a keynote address at the 5th Annual Graduate Entry Medical School (GEMS) Research Forum on Friday, 3rd February 2012. In his keynote address entitled “Essential Ingredients for Successful Clinical Research” Professor Fahey explored how and why competency in research and research methods enables clinicians to keep abreast of clinical evidence that impacts on the quality, safety and cost effectiveness of patient care. Professor Fahey outlined how protocol development and standardised reporting of research is a competency that provides a framework for critically appraising research evidence, providing a structure for continuing professional development for all health professionals.

Over twenty researchers from the University of Limerick took part in this year’s forum covering research in the areas of cancer cell biology, clinical therapies, population health data, health informatics, music therapy and medical law. All types of opportunities for translational medicine (i.e. applying basic research from the sciences, social sciences and political sciences to optimize patient care) will be showcased at this event. Professor William T O’Connor, Head of Teaching & Research in Physiology, UL and conference organiser said; “Researchers who want to translate their basic finding into clinical practice

find it a frustratingly long process, often taking 10 to 20 years. The forum is designed to shorten this timeframe by providing an opportunity for these researchers - both clinicians and non-clinicians – to meet for our graduate medical students and these contacts may be useful later-on.” Professor Fahey has 20 years of experience of clinical general practice which includes working as a GP in Oxford, Bristol, Dundee and Dublin. He combines clinical work with teaching and research, and continues to see patients in a practice in Belgrave Clinic, Dublin. Professor Fahey was presented the Samuel Crumpe keynote speaker award by the Graduate Entry Medical School. The Annual Research Forum is a unique event in the university sector in Ireland. This type of forum provides a broad overview of the interdisciplinary and collaborative research in the field of healthcare undertaken across UL’s student body, faculty and research community.



Professor Tom Fahey, Graduate Entry Medical School, Medical Research Forum, Professor William T O’Connor.

2011 Summer Studentship

By Patrick Carroll (2nd Year student)



The Graduate Entry Medical School (GEMS) offered summer studentships for the summer of 2011. The student applicant could choose a branch medicine to do research in that interested them and the GEMS would try their best to match them to that. I was subsequently matched to the vascular team in the Mid-Western Regional Hospital (MWRH). The Associate Professor of Surgery to the GEMS and Consultant Vascular Surgeon Professor Stewart Walsh was to be my supervisor for the eight-week duration of the studentship. I was given the opportunity to undertake a systematic review and meta-analysis. Initially it was quite a daunting prospect seeing as I had never put a paper like this together and hadn’t even covered what a systematic review and meta-analysis was exactly.

However, any worries I had were overcome as Professor Walsh talked me through the process and I immediately began the research. Over the following 8 weeks, I worked on the research paper under the guidance of Professor Walsh. We would meet every couple of weeks in the University of Limerick’s Clinical Academic Liaison (CAL) Building across the road from the MWRH. After 8 weeks we had completed the paper. It was a systematic review and meta-analysis on surgeon-performed ultrasound at the bedside for gallstones and appendicitis. It is currently submitted to a peer reviewed journal and hopefully it will be published in the near future. I would recommend a studentship to anyone unsure of how to spend his or her summer. Not only was it a fantastic learning opportunity, there was a financial bursary of €2,000 and I will hopefully get a publication out of it. I also had the opportunity to shadow Professor Walsh in the operating theatre. Importantly, I had 3 weeks to relax before returning for 2nd year. Finally, I would like to thank the GEMS, its staff and faculty, in particular Professor Walsh and Professor Dunne, for giving me this opportunity. Subsequently, the paper Patrick worked on “Surgeon-Performed Ultrasound at the Bedside for the Detection of Appendicitis and Gallstones: Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis” has been accepted for publication in the American Journal of Surgery.

Amanda Cotter MD MRCOG MRCPI MSPH



Professor Amanda Cotter graduated from Trinity College Dublin in 1994. She initially worked in Ireland and was an Assistant Master at the Coombe Women’s Hospital from 1998 until 2001. She then completed a three year Maternal Fetal

Medicine fellowship at the University of Miami. She was appointed Consultant Obstetrician and Specialist in Maternal Fetal Medicine in 2004 at the University of Miami/ Jackson Memorial Medical Center where she specialized in obstetric ultrasound, prenatal diagnosis, management of multiple gestations and care of women with complex obstetric problems including infectious diseases.

She was director of the single largest perinatal HIV service in the USA for six years based at the University of Miami. She has served as a member of the obstetric committee of the Pediatric AIDS Clinical Trials Group, a faculty member of the AIDS Education Training Centre for Florida and the Caribbean, a member of the US Department of Health and Human Services panel on Treatment of HIV infected pregnant women and prevention of perinatal transmission. Her awards include the William Stokes Award for Research from the RCPI, the John McCain Fellowship Award from the South Atlantic Association of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, the David Mitchell Research Medal from the RCPI. She returned to Ireland in 2011 when appointed Professor and Chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the University of Limerick, based at the Midwestern Maternity Hospital.

With 18 years of clinical and research experience in high risk obstetrics, she has had the opportunity to be involved in significant research impacting the management of HIV in pregnancy. Her publications and scientific presentations include both chapters and scientific articles that reflect her ongoing research activities in Maternal Fetal Medicine.

Surgical Case Competition

The Surgical Case Competition was held on Wednesday the 17th January. All consultants present commented that the quality of presentations was outstanding and the competition was very close.

The winner on the evening was James East who presented on behalf of Mr Eoghan Condon on “Mucinous Cystadenocarcinoma of the appendix.” James later represented GEMS/UL at the RCSI Intercollegiate competition at the Charter Day. We would like to thank all who presented for an incredible level of work and outstanding presentations.