



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

GRADUATE ENTRY MEDICAL SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Welcome Class 2010

From left to right names of students include: —

Front Row: Tom Ballance, David Morris, Mark Conway, Marianne Mulcahy, Jordan Power Elf, Rabee Jamali, Joanne Fegan, Charlene Barter, Lily Edelson, Ashley Ho, Heather Konkin, Caoimhe Costigan, Katie Hanley, Carol Norton, Kate Lawlor, Eimear Smith, Victoria Ronan, Natalie Finner

Second Row: Edric Leung, Danny Monsour, Paul Stanley, David Chong, Judith Ellen Gilmore, Michael Yacob, Lisa McKinnon, Anthony Shanika Wewage Dep, Jatin Kaicker, Andrea Martin, Jonathan Duboff, Anik Mommsen-Smith, Ryan McArthur, Darya Yermak, Katherine Krause, Ashley Pardoe, Kevin Lally, Patrick Carroll, Sinead Haugh, Khing Su Lin, Toni Adeoye, Gurdev Bhurji, Eireana Goulden, Mari Gleeson, Sarah Keaveney, Namrta Yashpal, Sarah McDonnell, Louise Troddyn, Jenny Roche

Third Row: Paul Cromwell, Cathy Baxter, Spencer Hodgins, Sanath Rao, Diarmuid O'Sullivan, Una Sutton Fitzpatrick, Syed Asad Naqvi, Debbie White, Aoife Hughes, Ciara Holohan, Neil O'Driscoll, Lesley Duggan, Dave Roche, Deacon Farrell, Laura Donoghue, Louise O'Rourke, Lucy Quilter, Katie Spencer, Laura Griseto, Edwina Buckley, Muireann Quane, Laura Quick, James McDermott, Caroline Kearney, Laura Slattery, Nicola Faichney, Alice Neylan

Back Row: Eoghan Hearne, Benjamin Cantan, Stuart O'Flanagan, Mario Samaha, Padraig Calpin, Joseph Joshua Walsh, Bill Beckett, Regan Cooley, Niall Vaughan, Cillian Keogh, Chris Barter, Niall McCourt, Matthew Stajcer, David McNeill

Upcoming events

19th January 2011 — Research Forum

5th February 2011 — The Medical Society's "Annual Charity Ball" will take place on 5th February 2011. Further information can be obtained by visiting Medical Society Group on Facebook

24th February 2011 — Public Lecture by President Mary McAleese, 7:00pm

24th March 2011 — Graduate Entry Medical School Open Evening. Further information can be obtained on UL Graduate Entry Medical School website

Inaugural Lectures

21st March 2011 — Prof. David Meagher

27th April 2011 — Prof. Colum Dunne

23rd May 2011 — Prof. Walter Cullen

Our students present papers at European Union Geriatric Medical Society (EUGMS)

Brid Minihan from Year 4 and Emma Jennings from Year 3 each presented papers at the recent European Union Geriatric Medical Society (EUGMS) meeting in Dublin. This meeting attracted over 1,300 delegates and was one of the first events to be held at the new Convention Centre Dublin. Brid's paper focused on the role of yoga in the well-being of elderly people while Emma's research explored the link between aortic calcification and increased cardiovascular risk.



GEMS Appointments



Professor Walter Cullen

The Graduate Entry Medical School welcomes Professor Walter Cullen as its Foundation Professor of General Practice. In this role, Professor Cullen will lead the teaching programme in General Practice and continue to develop links with general practices to support the School's curriculum and its strong primary care orientation.

Prof. Cullen worked as a GP in Dublin's South Inner City and as a Lecturer at UCD since 1998, during which time he was a 'Visiting Academic' at Melbourne University. He leads two HRB-funded projects — one addressing youth mental health in Limerick City.

Speaking on his new role: "It is exciting to work with colleagues in a medical school which provides students with such a sustained exposure to general practice. Students find this both challenging and enjoyable. It is a privilege to work with such enthusiastic, committed GPs and such professional, motivated students."

Professor J Calvin Coffey

Professor J Calvin Coffey has recently been appointed as the Foundation Chair in Surgery in the Graduate Entry Medical School. He returns to this position having completed his surgical training in the Cleveland Clinic, Ohio, USA. After graduating in 1998 from University College Cork he was awarded an associate fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland in 2001 and commenced research into the effects of surgical trauma on tumour growth. The latter was under the supervision of Professor Paul Redmond and Tom Cotter and led to the award of a PhD as well as to numerous highly cited publications. More recently he was awarded the fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons and completed his surgical training with fellowships in laparoscopic colorectal surgery at the Hospital de Medici in Barcelona and in the Department of Colorectal Surgery at the Cleveland Clinic. His surgical interests lie in the surgical management of colorectal cancer, inflammatory bowel related conditions such as ulcerative colitis and Crohns disease, and functional abnormalities of the colon and pelvic floor. His research interests relate to the application of systems biologic techniques in the evaluation of surgical diseases. In particular he has focused on bioinformatic appraisals of colorectal cancer genomics and gastrointestinal microbial ecology. In terms of education his interests lie in training in surgical technique.

He describes his appointment as an opportunity to work with and train some of the medical leaders of the future, in the

context of Europe's newest medical school and graduate entry medical education.

"Graduate entry medical students differ from direct entry students in their life experience, maturity of purpose and, as a result, in their ability to bring a humanistic and dignified approach to healthcare service provision. The GEMS was established by Professor Paul Finucane with the mission statement of the school setting out to develop doctors that are confident, capable and compassionate."

"It was this emphasis on human dignity and the manner in which disease interfaces with the human condition in general, that was a particular attraction for me. This is forgotten or omitted or poorly addressed in training programmes throughout the world yet it is a core component from the outset in the UL GEMS programme. The result will be realized in a highly capable clinician who wants to provide optimal health care for patients in a compassionate manner."

"In essence this is a very exciting time for Limerick, Clare, Tipperary and the Mid-West in general. The platform that Professor Finucane and GEMS has generated in the University of Limerick is a "regional" medical campus. The emphasis on overlapping primary, tertiary and intermediate care in the students' education will develop doctors with an in-depth understanding of the overall process of health care service delivery."

The benefits of this approach will in turn extend to research where the combination of components/facilities/capabilities



currently present in UL provide the basis of a translational medical programme.

"My sense is that we can anticipate the development of research programmes under the stewardship of Professor Colum Dunne, that will provide direct benefits to health care provision with an inbuilt means of integrating with industry. The result will help not only the patients of the Mid-Western region but will have an immense socioeconomic impact in the Mid-Western region in general."

"To my mind the students that graduate from GEMS will have an understanding of health care process and service delivery that will ultimately manifest in a health-care policy based on the mission statement components. Thus I am privileged to have a role in this kind of programme."

Pamela Davoren talks of her student experience of GP placement in Third Year

By Pamela Davoren

"If you like variety, you'll like general practice." That was the advice given to me by Professor Bill Shannon during my second year in UL. I experienced some of this variety first hand during my GP placement in Third year. I had the privilege of spending nine weeks with Dr. Dom Lehane in Tarbert, Co. Kerry and a further nine weeks with Dr. Pat O'Dwyer in Cappamore, Co. Limerick. Having my own room to see patients really helped build my confidence in the art of history taking and examination. Professor Walter Cullen paid a visit to the practice in Tarbert in the first few weeks to ensure I was settling in.

During the eighteen weeks, I learned a bit more about Kerry football and Limerick hurling and (perhaps) more importantly, I experienced plenty of the common conditions managed in general practice and some of the rarer ones. I assisted in antenatal checks, baby checks, travel vaccinations and minor operations.

I helped organise patients for transfer to hospital and travelled some of the byroads of Kerry with Shannondoc. Overall it was a fantastic learning experience, made all the better by two GPs who are passionate about their patients and about teaching.



A summer Studentship working in Limerick Mid-Western Regional Hospital

By Ger Duff



A picture of me performing an exam on a friend who volunteered to take part in my project.

In the UL Med School, the summer holiday between 1st year and 2nd year is a time when many students go travelling to foreign shores like America, Africa or Asia. Being the adventurous soul that I

am, I stayed in Limerick. I was accepted for a summer studentship working in the Limerick Mid-Western Regional Hospital's vascular imaging lab under Professor Pierce Grace. I applied because I had worked in vascular research during my science undergrad and I expected to be doing similar work — growing cells, doing experiments, etc. On my first day the lab had not opened yet, so I was called in to a surgery theatre and was quizzed about the anatomy of the gallbladder, while Prof. Grace removed one.

The vascular imaging lab examines people's blood vessels with ultrasound and other techniques to check for narrowing or blockages. I worked on a project comparing a newer method of examining blood flow to a patient's

legs and feet with an older, widely used technique. I entirely enjoyed this experience. I got to practise some of the skills I had learned during my first year, such as history taking and measuring blood pressure, in a real clinical setting with genuine patients. I was also able to familiarise myself with the layout and workings of a hospital like the Limerick Regional. I feel that undertaking a summer studentship like this is an invaluable way of spending part of the summer and is of great benefit to students at our stage. The project I performed with Prof. Grace and his team yielded some interesting results and may be published. I thank Professor Grace, his team and the staff of the Medical School for giving me this awesome experience.



Prizewinning Student Research

The Graduate Entry Medical School held a very successful Poster Exhibition on May 14th. Picture shows the Assignment lead Dr. Jean Saunders (GEMS) with prizewinner Daniel O'Hare.

Operation Smile Fellowship

Michael O'Callaghan, a Year 4 GEMS student has been awarded an Operation Smile Fellowship, which he will use to participate in an Operation Smile mission in India next December. Operation Smile is an international charity which focuses on the repair of cleft lip, cleft palate and other selected conditions among children in developing countries.

Since its foundation in 1982, Operation Smile has treated more than 140,000 children in over 50 countries. Michael has been involved in voluntary work from a young age. He holds an engineering degree from NUIG and a Higher Diploma in Software Design and Development, also from NUIG.



Students and Supervisors at Midlands Regional Hospital, Tullamore.

Back row from L to R: — Marie Gunning, Administrator, Pia McCurtain, Year 3, Claire Kehoe, Year 4, Liz Dunbar, Year 3, Jane Cronin, Year 3, Lee Yap, Year 4, Sinead Carr, Year 4, Dermot Bowden, Year 4, Chris Healy Year 3.

Front Row From L to R: — Dr. John McManus (Physician), Mr. Sean Johnson (Surgeon), Dr. Ger Crotty (Clinical Director), Peter Waters (Hospital Manager).

Student Experience Midlands Regional Hospital by Liz Dunbar

'To study the phenomena of disease without books is to sail an uncharted sea, while to study books without patients is not to go to sea at all' – Sir William Osler, Aequanimitas. I think it would be safe to say that for 3rd years at least we were ready to trade some of those hours in the library, and that first day in the foyer began with an air of excited anticipation – although I for one was not quite feeling the Aequanimitas – I was a nervous wreck. All for naught. Our experience in Tullamore has been, with very few exceptions, marvellous. From the word go, there was an acceptance as part of a team, not merely supernumerary but a productive member, part of the organic experience that is teaching, learning and clinical practice of hospital medicine and surgery. The building is light, airy and state of the art (thanks Mr. Cowan), the staff are friendly and eager to share their expertise with

those who are interested. We are very much encouraged to do call – giving us the opportunity to admit patients, try to develop therapeutic plans, watch those plans evolve as the patient is under the care of our team. We are rather unfortunate in that we are currently without a tutor. However, along with continuously learning on the hoof there are many other opportunities – X-ray conference, journal club, grand rounds, consultant bedside teaching, Nurse Specialist teaching, and we are actively encouraged to engage with radiology, histology, and really any other specialty that is available. So integrated are we that 2 of our number were involved in a hospital fundraiser for the victims of the Pakistan flood. Ticket for the night – 10 euro. Seeing Dermot and Lee dressed up as Mr. Hehir, Consultant Surgeon – priceless.

Student Cormac O'Connor representing Ireland in European Kick Boxing in Athens

Having competed successfully in the World Championships in Austria last year, Cormac O'Connor a Year 4 GEMS student was selected to represent Ireland in the European Kick Boxing Championships in Athens last month. Originally from Sligo, Cormac now trains in Limerick while studying medicine at UL. Apparently you wouldn't want to meet him on a dark night!



Year 4 Medical Students Successfully complete Advanced Trauma in the Community Course with the Academy of Medical Education by Mark Dixon

November saw the second 'Advanced Trauma in the Community' course successfully completed with UL's Academy of Emergency Medical Education. The multidisciplinary course comprised Medical Practitioners, Nurses, Paramedics /Advanced Paramedics and for the first time Medical Students. 4th year med students Brian King and Lee Yap who participated in the two day programme demonstrated admirably their new clinical and patient assessment skills

which facilitated them in dealing with patients from simulated road traffic collisions, fire arms incidents, environmental emergencies, confined space rescue as well as sporting and industrial accidents. Theoretical knowledge was also assessed in final exams, with once more the two GEMS representatives acquitting themselves alongside the seasoned practitioners. Congratulations to both Brian and Lee from all in the Academy.



Lee Yap



Brian King

Student Experience of Advanced Trauma in the Community Programme By Brian King

The ATC course run by the AEME in the University of Limerick was a fantastic experience over a 2 day period. As a medical student it took me completely out of my comfort zone, required me to think laterally and on the go, responding to trauma situations as they evolved and anticipating future problems. Full demonstrations of advanced trauma care techniques proved invaluable and exposure to simulations of real-life trauma scenarios proved challenging, both physically and mentally, as well as being thoroughly enjoyable. The variety of backgrounds of the participants made for unique multidisciplinary teams, with each person making key contributions from their specialist areas. Most importantly it made us think and work as a team to reach a common goal. Overall a thoroughly exhilarating, exhausting and most enjoyable course run by a fantastic team of medical and paramedical professionals. Currently I am on final year placement in Portiuncula Hospital in Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.

The placement consists of two 9 week attachments in medicine and surgery. My first placement was in Gastroenterology but given the nature, size and catchment area of the hospital, this also encompassed general medicine, with everything from strokes to elderly care being dealt with, both on the wards and in outpatient appointments. This gave me a great exposure to the breadth of medical conditions that commonly present in hospital medicine. I'm currently in the middle of my General Surgery attachment at the moment. Surgery in Portiuncula is varied and consists of outpatient referrals and post-operative follow ups, as well as getting hands-on experience during theatre time in operations such as appendicectomies, hernia repairs, gallbladder removals, varicose vein removals, as well as in colonoscopies and endoscopies. Also there are the daily early morning 8am ward rounds, which is something which probably took the most getting used to, given that I'm a reluctant early morning riser!