



UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

Graduate Entry Medical School Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 2 – June 2009



Early Patient Contact Program



Peter Brown (1st year student) and Oisín Moore



Baby Oisín Moore

The early patient contact program aims to give us a longitudinal look at patients along with the more traditional cross sectional approach that we will experience in third and fourth year in the clinic and hospital settings. This is an effort to ameliorate the decline in empathy towards patients often seen in medical students as they progress through medical school, to help us see the person with the illness rather than the illness in the person. Most of us work in pairs with our two patients and Peter Brown and myself have been blessed with two most wonderful people to work with, and a fantastic GP in Bláithín Touhy, who is not only very enthusiastic about the program but provides us with excellent modelling opportunities as we see her interact in a very compassionate and human way with her patients.

Our no longer pregnant woman, Marion Moore, met us first in the clinic before Christmas when she was 23 weeks pregnant and preparing for her third birth by caesarean section. We were very excited that day when she invited us to attend the birth. Over the subsequent months we met Marion at her routine GP practice nurse visit - ten minutes - and her routine hospital visit - 4 hours! The latter was a very good insight into how frustrating a public clinic can be for a patient, especially if you have other young children for whom hospital is perhaps not

the most exciting place. Dr. Touhy and Professor Shannon meanwhile smoothed the way for our visit to the theatre for our ringside seats at the section.

Monday the twenty-third of March dawned. By the time we were ushered into the theatre, the procedure was well underway. Marion was all smiles in anticipation of the new arrival. The abdominal wall was open, and the two doctors performing the surgery explained that they were carefully cutting away adhesions from the previous sections before opening up the uterus. Then the paediatrician was called, the womb opened and out came Oisín Moore to greet the world. While the paediatrician and a midwife checked Oisín over, it was back to business with Marion, with delivery of the placenta and then re-stitching. We were given a good look at the womb, ovaries, round and broad ligament etc - We could even name a few bits, Professor Lawes would have been so proud!

We called in to see Marion and her family three weeks later, and were informed by Erin and Eoin (brother and sister of baby Oisín) that while the new baby is lovely, he cries all the time! Despite these protestations, while we were visiting there wasn't a peep out of him. We look forward with great anticipation to following his progress over the next year.

Liz Dunbar, 1st year student

The Canadian Student Experience

Imagine a scenario where 17 people were plucked from the various cities and towns of one of the biggest and most diverse countries and then placed on an island in the North Atlantic, well known for its lively culture and "great weather." Now take that same group of people and mix them in with about 50 locals and then, just to spice things up further, put them all together in one of the most intense and challenging university courses. This is essentially the scenario which I, and 16 of my fellow country men/women, have found ourselves in by entering the Graduate Medical Programme at UL, and we wouldn't change a thing!

As to be expected there have been a few cultural transitions to acclimatize with. Gone are the days where any well put together sentence would end in a strategically placed "eh"? Gone too is currency covered with animals, 37 feet of snow on your car in the morning, moose on the highway and that cultural oddity known only as "Quebec."

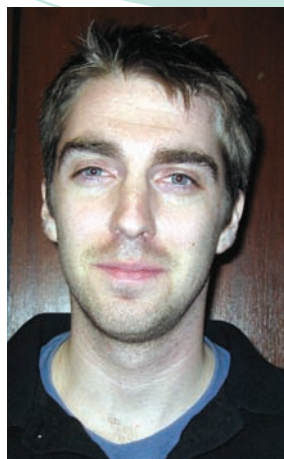
Of course Ireland is a generous country and has been more than gracious with its own idiosyncrasies to fill the

void. Whether you're heading to the barber for a bazzar, over at a friend's gaff, or enjoying all the meals which come in roll form, as a Canadian you'll be spending a fair bit of time figuring out just what is the craic? And while you're at it, who the hell is "your man" and why are people always referencing him? Ireland's generosity will easily overwhelm any feelings of homesickness.

While the University of Limerick might be half a world away for most of us it does not feel all that foreign. The programme itself is world class and as a graduate entry medical school it is what Canadians are used to. Of course if anyone were to have difficulty adjusting to their new surroundings there are numerous support networks and kind people to make the transition as smooth as possible.

So far studying medicine in Ireland has been a wonderful experience. The people, the culture and the program have made us all feel so welcome it is almost overwhelming. For anyone looking for a bit of adventure and the opportunity to broaden their horizons this would be the deal of a lifetime.

Chris Baker, 1st year student



Chris Baker, 1st year student

Recent Visitors to the School

Samuel Crumpe Keynote Speaker Award

Upcoming Events

Music and Medicine

The Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, in association with the School is hosting the inaugural meeting of the International Association for Music and Medicine. A conference day will be held as part of the event on Saturday June 6th at the Carlton Castletroy Park Hotel. Programme details are available at www.internationalassociationformusicandmedicine.com For further information contact Professor Jane Edwards, Jane.Edwards@ul.ie



Professor John Crowne receiving the Samuel Crumpe Keynote Speaker Award from Professor Billy O'Connor on behalf of the school

It has been decided to name the keynote lecture at the UL Graduate Entry Medical School Annual Research Forum in honour of Dr. Samuel Crumpe (1766-1796), physician to St. John's Hospital in Limerick and undoubtedly one of the most academic doctors Limerick ever produced. Professor John Crown delivered the Samuel Crumpe Lecture under the title "A Cure for Cancer – Recent Developments" in UL on January 20th, 2009. Professor Crown is a Consultant Medical Oncologist at St. Vincent's University Hospital and St Luke's/ St. Anne's Hospital in Dublin. One of the most high-profile cancer researchers in Ireland, he is not averse to speaking out in the media on behalf of his patients.

Inaugural Annual Public Lecture

Mary Harney T.D., Minister for Health and Children delivered the Graduate Entry Medical School Inaugural Public Lecture entitled 'The Role of the State in Healthcare in 21st Century Ireland' to an audience of over 500 invited guests in the University Concert Hall on the evening of Thursday January 22nd 2009.

The objective of the Graduate Entry Medical School Public Lecture Series is to engage the local and national community with the teaching and research plans currently underway in the new school, and is given by world leaders in Science, Humanities, Education and Politics.

The attendance included the 100 graduate students and approx 400 invited guests of the University and was also open to members of the public. Notice of the Graduate Entry Medical School Inaugural Public Lecture was also posted in the local and national press.

As part of the proceedings on the evening, Professor Don Barry, President of UL, provided the welcome address and following this, Professor Paul Finucane,

Head of the school, introduced the Minister as the keynote speaker.

The Minister commenced her speech by expressing her delight at being invited to deliver the Graduate Entry Medical School Inaugural Public Lecture and saluted the University for its successful tender for the School and for its novel approach to teaching. She followed this with a thoughtful and provocative lecture outlining her vision for the role of the State in the delivery of healthcare. The full text of the Minister's lecture can be downloaded here (<http://www2.ul.ie/pdf/963614797.pdf>). The Minister was followed by a lecture from Mr. Paul Burke, a consultant vascular surgeon who spoke about the local perspective. A number of questions from the audience were then answered via the chair.

Following her lecture, the Minister was escorted across campus to the Graduate Entry Medical School where she was introduced to the graduate medical students, faculty and staff and was shown a number of clinical and anatomical skills demonstrations.

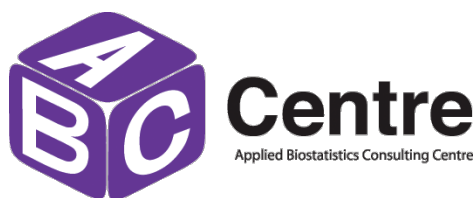


L-R Ms. Mary Harney TD, Professor Mary O'Sullivan (Dean, Faculty of Education and Health Sciences), Jane Cronin (1st Year Student) and Peter Brown (1st Year Student)



L-R Professor Don Barry (President of UL), Ms. Mary Harney, TD (Minister for Health and Children) and Mr. Paul Burke (Consultant)

Research at the School



Dr. Jean Saunders joined the school last year as Consultant Biostatistician and since then has taken responsibility for the research methods, critical appraisal and biostatistics streams in the graduate medical degree programme. Jean is Executive Director of the Statistical Consulting Unit (SCU) and Director of the Applied Biostatistics Consulting Centre (ABCC) which is situated within the GEMS at the University of Limerick.

This centre (ABCC) provides face-to-face consultation and advice on research undertaken by health professionals within the HSE Faculty and the HSE by appointment and regular 'Drop-in' clinics. Regular courses ranging from half-day duration to a one-week Summer School type structure are also organised from the ABCC. At present the SCU/ABCC at UL runs with one Director and 2 Statistical Assistants plus interns from other Universities and Co-op students for various periods during the year. (The SCU also currently operates a Statistical Consultancy Service to the whole UL campus).

Jean would now like to announce the imminent launch of CSTAR which is a joint collaboration between the SCU/ABCC at the University of Limerick and the School of Public Health and Population Science at University College Dublin. CSTAR is funded by the Health Research Board and will offer consultancy and research methodology advice in Health Research to everyone involved within the whole of Ireland.

The SCU and its UL collaborators *i.e.* Health Systems Research Centre (HSyRC) and the Strategic Healthcare Management Research Group (SHMRG) as well as the National Institute of Health Sciences (NIHS) (part of the HSE and based within St Camillus Hospital, Limerick), all have extensive experience in consultancy/advisory work. A further collaborator in the UL site of CSTAR will be Professor Paul Finucane, Foundation Head of the new UL Graduate Entry Medical School. Other collaborators include Professor Stiofan deBourca (Director HSRC), Dr. Claire Armstrong (Director SHMRG), Dr. Kevin Hayes (Biostatistician) and Mr. Aidan Hickey (Director NIHS). The main UCD collaborator is Leslie Daly, Professor of Epidemiology and Biomedical Statistics in their School of Public Health and Population Science. Dr. Jean Saunders, Director ABCC, will oversee the consultancy advice given by the UL centre and will design/deliver the educational components as well as being part of the Board of Directors



Dr. Jean Saunders, Consultant Biostatistician

of CSTAR.

CSTAR will achieve the objectives detailed in the HRB call for a national health research methodology support centre by enabling national access of those engaged in health research to:

- An internet/telelinkage consultancy/advice service.
- Sustained support on a collaborative basis for major projects
- Training courses in research methodologies particularly at a basic level.
- Help at all levels and stages of research.

If you would like further information about the service provided by CSTAR please contact Dr. Jean Saunders at jean.saunders@ul.ie or look at the website at <http://www.ul.ie/scu/ABC.htm> which will be updated soon to give direct links to CSTAR.

Medical Education in Ireland: Changing Times

The UL Graduate-Entry Medical School (ULGEMS) was well represented at the recent second annual scientific meeting of the Irish Network of Medical Educators (INMED) in University College Cork with a total of six oral and poster presentations covering all aspects of its problem based curriculum. The conference brought together over 70 delegates to present and discuss their latest research and accepted abstracts will be published in the Irish Journal of Medical Science.

Central to the scientific programme was a ULGEMS – sponsored symposium on the topic of *Simulation in the Education and Training of Health Care Professionals* which addressed the different ways in which simulation is being used in the education of healthcare professionals in Ireland and identified the limited research evidence of its effectiveness. Recommendations from the symposium included the establishment of a national specialist interest group in clinical skills to promote collaboration between the Universities in Ireland, the development of a national research project in three targeted areas of clinical skills education, the development of a clinical skills action plan that addresses all health care professionals and finally the mapping of current facilities and clinical skills education programmes in Ireland in order to develop national standards of clinical skills education.



Dr. Deirdre McGrath (Senior Lecturer and Head of Clinical Skills Education Centre) and Ms. Denise Flannery (Executive Administrator)

St. Luke's Hospital, Kilkenny



The Medical School takes Shape

Construction work has begun on the new Graduate Entry Medical School building on the UL campus. This will be located on the Clare side of the campus near to the existing Health Sciences complex and to the new home for the Irish World Academy for Music & Dance. The new Medical School building will be a 4,000 sq.m. facility and will cost in the region of €15 million. The building will be on four levels. The ground floor will contain a 150-seat lecture theatre and two 60-seat seminar rooms, together with a restaurant and some social space. It is expected that this floor of the building will be much used by outside groups for conferences, scientific meetings and the like. The first floor will have tutorial rooms, computer laboratories and self-directed learning spaces. The second floor will have first class facilities for anatomical skills and clinical skills teaching while the top floor will have research space as well as being home to the Mid-West GP Training Programme. Office accommodation will be distributed throughout the building. The building has been designed by Grafton Architects who recently won the 'World Building of the Year' award for their design of the University Luigi Bocconi campus in Milan. Grafton have also designed a new residential complex which will be an extension of the new Medical School building. The building will be completed by late 2010.

Planning is also well advanced on the construction of a 2000 sq.m. Education & Research Centre on the Dooradoyle site. Though this facility will be used by all students and hospital staff, UL has agreed to fund 50% of the overall cost, which is estimated at €10 million. It is expected that the project will go to tender in late April, that construction work will begin later in the year, and that the building will be completed by late 2010.



L - R: Dr. Henry Burke, Consultant Obstetrician, Dr Colm McGurk, Consultant Endocrinologist, Dr Niall Kavanagh, Consultant Anaesthetist, Dr David Waldron, Consultant Paediatrician, Dr Rory McGovern, Consultant Geriatrician and secretary of the Medical Board, Dr Phyllis O'Sullivan, Consultant Radiologist and chairperson of the Medical Board, Dr Ray O'Sullivan, Consultant Obstetrician, Dr Garry Courtney, Consultant Gastroenterologist and Clinical Director of St Luke's Hospital, Dr Mary Mooney, Consultant Psychiatrist, Mr Paul Balfe, Consultant Surgeon

St. Luke's Hospital has 317 beds, about 1000 staff and provides care for people in Carlow and Kilkenny and some part of counties Laois, Kildare, Wexford, Waterford and Tipperary - a catchment population in excess of 150,000.

St. Luke's is a busy, but friendly, general hospital and provides services in Medicine, Surgery, Anaesthetics, Obstetrics, Gynaecology, Paediatrics, Emergency Department, Psychiatry, Occupational Health and Radiology. In 2008 there were about 16,000 inpatient admissions and over 9,000 day cases treated by the 36 Consultants and 76 NCHDs based there.

Services have increased in recent years and, for instance in Medicine, sub specialization is provided in Endocrinology, Diabetes, Cardiology, Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Geriatrics by eight in-house physicians while another nine visiting Consultants in provide services in a range of disciplines including Oncology, Radiotherapy, Palliative Care, Breast Care, Neurology, Rheumatology, Dermatology, Haematology and Microbiology.

There is a strong philosophy of teaching in St. Luke's - all NCHD posts are fully accredited for training and medical students attend from the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (4th year RCSI), University College Dublin (4th year UCD) as well as overseas elective students in final year Erasmus programmes. We make use of teleconferencing and other services to link with larger institutions.

The incoming medical students from the University of Limerick will be a most welcome addition to this already diverse programme and will herald a new era for clinical teaching of students raised on Problem Based Learning.

Update from the Graduate Entry Medical School's Advisory Committee

Professor Jane Edwards is the new chair of our Advisory Committee. The inaugural Chair Professor Mary O'Sullivan stepped down in December 2008. Dr. Ann Taylor has resigned as a committee member. Both Professor O'Sullivan and Dr. Taylor participated in key achievements of the Committee including producing the mission statement, devising the Code of Professional Conduct, and conducting the competition for the GEMS logo. The committee has welcomed two new members, Dr. Amir Shafat and Ms. Alice O'Leary. Dr. Shafat is a UL staff representative on the committee. He is a lecturer in physiology in the EHS faculty with research expertise in gastrointestinal physiology and metabolic disorders. Ms. O'Leary is with the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The next meeting will include presentations by GMS faculty.



L-R Professor Mary O'Sullivan (Dean, Education and Health Sciences) and Professor Jane Edwards (Irish World Academy of Music and Dance)