



A Message from our Director of Nursing

Dear Colleagues,

We celebrated Mercy Day on the 24th of September, an important day that provides the impetus to reflect on the journey Mercy has taken since its foundation and all that has been achieved. This year we also reflected on our core values which are the guiding principles for our interaction with patients and colleagues, outlined in detail in this edition. These values underpin the hospital services and activities which we continue to work hard towards improving.

Our ongoing improvements are sustained by the exceptional care and leadership demonstrated by staff at all levels in the organisation.

Enhancing patient's experience of our care remains a key focus of our activities. Providing safe and effective care remains central to our engagement and partnership with our patients. As we continue to treat an increasing number of patients and as the patient journey through the hospital is shortened, our shared vision for excellence in care will ensure our patients experience, and achieve the best possible outcomes. Our patients and their families greatly appreciate our efforts which are acknowledged by the many letters and cards received by you all.

Bridie O'Sullivan
Director of Nursing

Reaching Out ... - COPD Outreach Programme

The term COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) encompasses the diseases of chronic bronchitis, emphysema, and occasionally chronic asthma. COPD is one of the leading causes of mortality and morbidity worldwide. In Ireland 400,000 people suffer from COPD, with one in five people dying as a result of the disease.

The **COPD Outreach Programme** is a Cork City based service that aids in the early discharge of patients who present with an "exacerbation of COPD" to Mercy University Hospital. An exacerbation is a deterioration in patient's symptoms of cough, sputum production and shortness of breath, usually as a result of infection. The COPD Outreach team performs home visits to patients after they have been discharged. International guidelines from expert groups suggest that the 'hospital at home' programme is a safe, effective and efficient approach to the treatment of patients with COPD. In 2012, the COPD Outreach service was rolled out in 12 centers throughout the country as part of a national clinical care programme.



One patient responded
"No-one wants to stay in hospital, the COPD Outreach team helped me to get discharged from hospital earlier than usual – I am delighted with this. I have also learnt so much about my condition and how to manage it better"

(Continued on page 4)

The Heart of Mercy – 156 years and counting

By Maria McGuinness RSM

The Dream ...

As we ponder on Mercy University Hospital's 156 years of rich history, let us remember with Oliver Holmes that *"the great thing in this world is not so much where we are but in what direction we are moving."* To reclaim that sense of direction for today it is important to connect with those roots which set MUH firmly on its course.

In doing so we need to allow ourselves to be drawn into the source of where Catherine McAuley's Dream for Mercy began, 182 years ago in Baggot Street. Imagine her experiencing that Dream as it unfolded in a most compelling way, coursing a tangible compassion for the poorest through every fibre of her being. This was a Dream she knew that daring to follow would cause her to lose her prestigious footing in many areas. Her fears were surely founded as was evidenced in the many heartaches and stumbling blocks she experienced in trying to give life to that Dream. That it grew within her, even in the most difficult circumstances and a very active life, is without question, for she was a woman who lived life increasingly from the wells of her own contemplative heart – a heart that was in union with and completely trusting of the God who inspired her action. Catherine knew that for her, despite the numerous obstacles, the Dream was irresistible and that *"not to dare, is to lose oneself."*

The Commitment ...

Hear again Catherine naming the truth of her time: the uneducated and sick poor neglected in their destitution; oppressive social conditions of the 19th Century, that were far from kind to those who were considered the have-nots of society; children of God hungering for compassion and justice and dying for the want of a response; opportunities available only to the select minority. There she stood, a truly great woman, the harbinger of Good News. The poor were now to become the beloved focus of her Mission of Mercy. Her radical commitment to reaching out with practical compassion to their needs inspired and attracted many others. Together they moved into places of heart-rending unmet need both near and afar with absolute trust in the God who called them and promised to be with them.



The Reality ...

This is our heritage – a heritage that has continued to inspire thousands around the world. Today there are over 8,000 Sisters of Mercy, 5,000 associates, 250,000 partners in Mission. They can be found in every continent, spread throughout 49 countries around the world. Each one of us within this wide circle of Mercy has been entrusted with the nurturing and passing on of Catherine's inspirational legacy. When we take stock of how faithfully Catherine's Dream became a lived reality in "The Mercy" over the past 156 years we have indeed much to celebrate. From its humble 40 bed beginnings this first Mercy Hospital has developed into a modern 350 bed acute hospital providing excellent care for all who seek its services. It is indeed a great tribute to the multitude of 'care-givers' who so generously invested their time and talents over the years to promote purposeful progress while never losing sight of the people it served.

The Living Legacy ...

Following the celebrations for the 150th anniversary of the Hospital's foundation, both Management and the CEO of MUH asked the critical question: "How can we continue to preserve such a heritage in today's world?" They had the foresight to recognise as Yeats did that without due diligence, "things fall apart when the centre cannot hold." This led to the decision to engage management and staff in a process that would bring them right back to the heart of who they say they are. Caroline Reddington was assigned responsibility to co-ordinate this new initiative that was destined to permeate throughout the hospital. The role of the Core Purpose in determining the Hospital's direction and acting as the reference point for all its decisions was highlighted. It was agreed that a focus on Core Purpose is necessary to build cohesion as all unite around their common purpose. Time was then given for a cross section of hospital staff to identify and articulate the Values deemed to be core in the service of the Hospital's Purpose. It is these values that will remind staff of what is important; how to respond and act and what to prioritise.

The Future ...

At a meeting with the Board of Governors on the 29th July, collated feedback from the various workshops was presented. The Core Values identified by the staff were fully endorsed by the Board. A decision was made to officially launch the Values at a special Mass on Mercy Day. The Mass was beautifully celebrated by Fr. Pierce who 'interlaced' the values meaningfully throughout the ceremony. The choir of St. Mary's Church added great solemnity to the occasion and it was refreshing to see the involvement of so many staff from various departments of the hospital actively participate in the Mass.

A most moving and significant moment was when the scroll with the Values inscribed on it was placed on the altar. Fr. Pierce then invited Sandra Daly, CEO, Michael O’Sullivan, Chairman of the Board of Governors, Prof. David Kerins, Clinical Director and Sr. Clare O’Reilly, Leadership Team of the Mercy Sisters, to sign the commitment to the Values on behalf of the whole Hospital.

After the Mass Michael O’Sullivan, Chairman of the Board of Governors had the last words:
“LET US GO NOW AND LIVE THE VALUES”

MUH Core Values

RESPECT: is a recognition of the dignity of each person at all times.

“Our mutual respect is to be cordial.” (C. McAuley)

JUSTICE: is honouring the rights and responsibilities of each person in light of the common good.

“The poor need help today, not next week.” (C. McAuley)

COMPASSION: calls us to empathise with the other as we try to understand his/her suffering.

“The kind word, the gentle compassionate look and the patient hearing of sorrows – these cost the giver nothing.” (C. McAuley)

EXCELLENCE: means giving of our very best within the resources available to us.

“Take short, careful steps, not great strides.” (C. McAuley)

TEAM SPIRIT: is working together to achieve our common purpose.

“The Spirit of Union is the greatest blessing on a community.” (C. McAuley)



Launch of Patient Information Pack



Patient feedback is increasingly being used by healthcare providers as a mechanism to drive performance improvement and service quality and also helps providers to influence patient choice. Mercy University Hospital was delighted to recently unveil their new **Patient Information Pack** and welcome Mr. Greg Price Director of Advocacy and Ms Mila Whelan from the National Advocacy Unit, Quality and Patient Safety Directorate, of the HSE to the formal launch.

Mercy University Hospital was chosen as pilot site by the National Advocacy Unit for service user involvement. Patient Advocacy is an intrinsic element of the wider clinical governance strategy of our hospital and in addressing the launch, CEO, Sandra Daly stated, *“We all know that, no matter how well organizations perform there are always opportunities to improve the way services are delivered. When it comes to identifying improvement opportunities, patients are often those best placed to advise us on how to do so. As a result, effective patient feedback systems provide opportunities for all who wish to comment on their experiences. Service users are regularly informed of changes made as a result of their assessed needs”.*



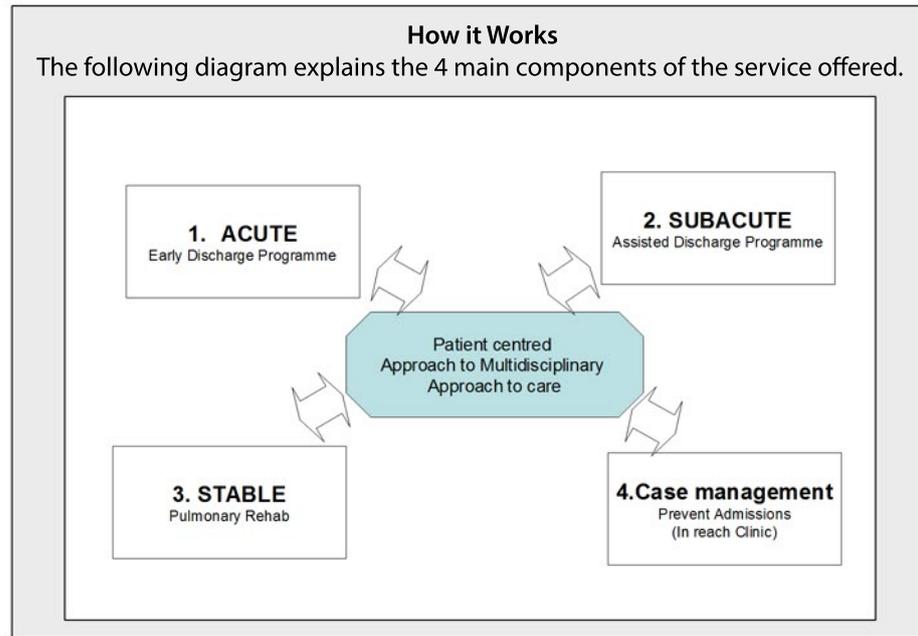
The Patient Information Pack is available at the Admissions Office, Theatre Reception and also from Patient Liaison Officer, Ms Josephine Griffin.

COPD Outreach Programme (continued from page 1)

Aims of Service

The main aims of the COPD Outreach programme are to:

- Aid in the early discharge of patients.
- Optimize patient care in the comfort of their own home.
- Reduce the number of admissions and re-admissions related to COPD.
- Reduce the average length of stay and bed days occupied by the COPD population.



Depending on the patient's length of stay in hospital, a patient will receive between 2 to 4 visits over the 2 week period following discharge.

Outlined below are the different types of discharge programmes available on the COPD Outreach Service.

ADMISSION AVOIDANCE	EARLY SUPPORTED DISCHARGE	ASSISTED DISCHARGE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Patient discharged from Emergency Department ▪ Visits: Approx 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Patient discharged within 0 – 72 hours of admission to the hospital ▪ Visits: Approx 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Patient admitted >72hrs ▪ Patient discharged with new treatment or has poor compliance/understanding ▪ Visits: Approx 2

A visit from one of the COPD Outreach team members entails:

- Advice and education on management of COPD
- Vital signs check
- Spirometry (breathing test)
- Smoking cessation advice
- Home exercise programme

Future Plans

Plans for the COPD In-reach clinic are now in progress in Mercy University Hospital. This clinic will allow patients on the scheme access to a medical review if they become unwell and will assist in avoiding admission of these patients to hospital.

The service is in the early stages of development but it is envisaged that the COPD Outreach Team will make a positive impact on the patient's journey through Mercy University Hospital.

The Outreach Team at Mercy University Hospital are:

Consultant Respiratory Physician, *Dr. David Curran*
 Clinical Nurse Specialist *Ms. Una Lehane*
 Senior Physiotherapist *Ms. Ciara Hanrahan*

GP Referrals for Out-Patient Clinics

Our Central Appointments office now deals with all referrals from GP's for appointments in OPD clinics. Upon receipt, the referral is immediately entered on the out patient waiting list and sent to the requested Consultant for triage.

All referrals should be addressed as follows:

Central Referrals Office
 Name Speciality
 Consultants Name
 Mercy University Hospital, Grenville Place, Cork.

We are the 1st pilot site for Phase 1 of the GP electronic referral. If you have not already signed up for this please contact:
 Ms Laura Cullinane:
 laura.cullinane@hse.ie or 021/4920747

Refurbished Mortuary Opening

The end of life journey is not an easy one to undertake for families and patients in a busy acute hospital. Here at the Mercy University Hospital we pride ourselves on being able to deliver compassionate care with dignity at this difficult time.

In January, 2011, a Standing Committee on end of life care was established in the hospital to implement the Hospice Friendly Hospitals Standards of Care. The committee has broad representation across all disciplines. One of the key projects undertaken by the Mercy to progress the implementation of these Standards was the refurbishment of our existing mortuary. This exemplar project was enabled by a Design and Dignity Grant from the Irish Hospice Foundation, the contribution of our own MUH Foundation and managed by the hospital's Development Team.



The Mortuary is now an inviting, serene, tranquil space, which will allow families spend uninterrupted time with their loved ones. For the nursing and portering staff, who are with the patient for the final journey to the mortuary, it is a privilege to be able to provide this aspect of care, which is now enhanced by the new building.

The mortuary has two viewing rooms and each contain different items to support all faith traditions and spiritual needs. There is also a sheltered area outside where relatives can spend time.

The official opening of the newly refurbished MUH Mortuary on March 20th, 2013 marked the next chapter in MUH's dedication and commitment to End of Life Care. Ms. Maura Derrane performed the official opening while Monsignor O'Callaghan performed the official blessing.

The End of Life Care Committee continues to develop their vision for the year ahead.

Admissions Office Upgrade



Listen.... People appreciate it when you pay attention.

When patients arrive to Mercy University Hospital, they are greeted by the Reception staff in the Front Lobby who will then direct them to our Admissions Office. Here they will meet with members of our Clerical Admission Staff who guide them through the admission process.

We have recently refurbished this area to make it more patient friendly. A third work station has been installed to assist at peak hours, in order to help alleviate queues, and to ensure that patients are transferred to the ward in a timely fashion, in preparation for the procedure for which they are scheduled. A Queue Management system, where patients take a ticket and wait to be called, has also been installed.

Attending hospital can be an arduous experience, whether the procedure is minor or major, and our staff in the Admissions Office are sensitive to the needs of all our patients, especially those who are worried or extremely ill. Patients are greeted with a cheery smile on the first stage of their journey through our hospital.



Nintendo arrives in the ED

Danny Cashman showcasing the new Nintendo machines installed in the Children's area of the Emergency Department. When Danny pointed out that there was nothing to keep older children/teenagers occupied while waiting in the ED, his suggestion of installing a Nintendo machine was greatly welcomed.

So, a big THANK YOU to Nintendo UK (via Game Ireland), who kindly donated the Nintendo Pod, Consoles and Games and indeed to Danny The Nintendo's are getting plenty of use and are a great addition ...

Pathology Department Receive ISO Accreditation



In February 2013, both the Biochemistry and the Haematology Laboratories at Mercy University Hospital were awarded accreditation status in compliance with ISO 15189:2007 "Medical Laboratories – particular requirements for quality and competence". This is an extension to the previously awarded accreditation status to the Blood Transfusion Laboratory which was awarded in 2011.

This is a huge achievement for the MUH laboratories which has taken a lot of hard work, dedication, commitment and support from everyone to attain this standard.

In April 2013, we extended the scope to include the Microbiology Laboratory, and we have recently received formal recognition of this extension, resulting in the whole Pathology Department gaining the much sought after ISO15189 approval. We are one of the few Pathology Departments in the country to achieve this.

The energy, commitment, enthusiasm and flexibility of all the staff involved in the dedication and work ethic has been acknowledged not only by the auditors repeatedly during the inspections, but also from hospital management. Thank you to everyone who supported us in our endeavours. The success of the inspection is a testament to the continued commitment to the quality agenda and patient care at MUH.

Valerie O'Sullivan - Quality Manager
Eleanor Carey - Quality Officer

JAG Accreditation

Following the JAG (Joint Advisory Group on GI Endoscopy) review in February 2013, it was confirmed that the Endoscopy Unit at Mercy University Hospital met all of the required JAG Accreditation standards and was awarded **Level 2 JAG Accreditation**. Thus far, the Endoscopy Unit at Mercy University Hospital is the first and only unit to have been awarded Level 2 Accreditation in Ireland.

Accreditation was achieved by the herculean endeavors of the multidisciplinary team and congratulations to all involved.

Having achieved Accreditation, MUH has been confirmed as a centre for the National Colorectal Cancer Screening Programme and a Clinical Nurse Specialist, in Gastroenterology Care has been appointed. Aligned with this achievement, MUH is the proposed site for a regional Gastroenterology Centre.



Assistant Director of Nursing Carol Hunter displays the JAG Certification received by Mercy University Hospital

The following are the JAG Global Rating Scale Standards Achieved by Mercy University Hospital.

Domain	Item	Score
Clinical Quality	Consent	A
	Safety	A
	Comfort	A
	Quality	A
	Appropriateness	B
	Communicating Results	A
Quality of the Patient Experience	Equality	A
	Timeliness	B
	Booking and Choice	A
	Privacy and Dignity	B
	Aftercare	A
	Feedback	A
Training	Environment and Training	A
	Endoscopy Trainers	B
	Assessment and Appraisal	A
	Equipment and Education Materials	B
Workforce	Skill Mix Review and Recruitment	A
	Orientation and Training	B
	Performance Review and Development	B
	Staff are cared for	A
	Staff are listed to	B

Stroke Care Foundation Education Programme

During the summer of 2013, a two Day Stroke Care Foundation Education Programme for all Health Care Professionals was facilitated in the Centre of Nurse Education by Course Co-ordinator, Mary Hayes, Clinical Nurse Specialist and by in house therapists and Consultant Dr. K. O'Connor.

The aim of the Stroke Care Foundation Education Programme is to facilitate all interdisciplinary healthcare staff in Mercy University Hospital to enhance their knowledge, skills, confidence and overall competence in stroke care, enabling them to practice safely and effectively, fulfilling their responsibility within his/her scope of practice.

With the implementation of the National Clinical Care Programme for Stroke Care and the establishment of the Advanced Stroke Unit, it is anticipated that this programme will be provided at least three times a year to our staff. This educational approach empowers participants to become autonomous learners and active partners in the delivery of effective care to patients affected by stroke.

Evidence-based practice supports the excellence achieved in healthcare services when the interdisciplinary team are committed to working in partnership, in the best interest of the patient. The team has an important role to play in the comprehensive assessment and/or screening, planning, interventions, stroke recognition, pre-hospital care, emergency management, acute treatment, transition and rehabilitation management and community re-engagement of individuals affected by stroke.



HIQA Medication Reconciliation Programme



In order to provide support to the Irish health and social care system and assist services to implement the National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare, HIQA has developed a collaborative with the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) Open School for Healthcare Professionals to provide education and training to front-line staff in Basic Quality Improvement Science, tools and methodologies.

MUH is participating in this initiative along with 3 other acute hospitals and 6 community hospitals nationally. A multidisciplinary team of 10 staff from MUH are receiving this training which is supported by a team at HIQA (Safety & Quality Improvement Team or SQID). The training consists of 18 online modules, taken monthly up to December 2013, supported by weekly teleconference with the SQID team and a monthly visit to the hospital.

As part of this learning, HIQA has embarked on a new patient safety initiative in relation to medication reconciliation. This enables the process of creating and maintaining the most accurate list possible of all medications a patient or resident is using. Medication reconciliation aims to provide correct medications to a patient or resident at all transition points within and between services.

The pilot sites, including the team at MUH will implement a medication reconciliation quality improvement project as the action learning component of the IHI Open School Training.

CT Scanners



Further to the launch of the Mercy University Hospital Foundation, in 2007, a number of commitments were made to the hospital by the newly formed Foundation. One of those commitments was to fund the replacement of what was then a nine years old 4 slice scanner with a new state of the art 64 slice scanner.

In the intervening years the Foundation, its donors and supporters began the task of raising the €600,000 in funding that was required to purchase this scanner. In 2010, following the decision to purchase the scanner from TOSHMedical a very generous offer was made to the Foundation by the company which enabled the Foundation and the hospital to make the decision to increase CT scanning capabilities at MUH by purchasing in addition a new 16 slice scanner.

Consultant Radiologist, Mr. Martin O'Driscoll reflects on what the completion of this project means... *"The 13 year old 4 slice scanner has been replaced, in a new purpose built state of the art suite which now houses a 16 slice and a 128 slice scanner from TOSH Medical. The scanners have greatly increased the CT capability of the Hospital. Cardiac imaging, including CT coronary artery angiography, virtual colonoscopy and virtual bronchoscopy are all now possible on the new machines which provide us with higher resolution imaging than previously at a much decreased radiation dose to the patient. The reduction in dose without any reduction in image quality has been made possible through the use of Adaptive Iterative Dose Reduction (AIDR)."*

The Foundation is delighted to have been able to play such a key role in advancing the diagnostic capabilities of the MUH Radiology Department and the professionalism and excellence of the team in the Radiology Department will undoubtedly place MUH at the forefront of scanning and diagnostics in Ireland.

Urology Laser Service

Consultant Urologists, Mr. Paul Sweeney and Mr. Ciaran Brady, with the Theatre team showcase the new Urology Laser Machine – Holmium Laser.

The introduction of this machine means the laser fibre can be passed inside the flexible endoscope up into the kidney and fragment smaller kidney stones not amenable to standard treatment (extracorporeal shockwave lithotripsy).

The continued contribution of the **MUH Foundation** to these projects is gratefully acknowledged.



Mercy University Hospital Foundation News

Radiothon Success ... Lunching Ladies ... Marathon Runners ...

The Cork's 96fm Giving for Living Radiothon reached new heights this year, raising an incredible €517,000, to be shared between the Mercy, CUH and Marymount.

Over €15,000 was raised in aid of the Mercy at this year's Ladies Lunch at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Little Island. 240 ladies enjoyed the day.



The Ladies were out in force for the Evening Echo Ladies Mini Marathon in September – a big thank you to all who walked ran etc. for Mercy ...

Mercy Stars Awards: Honoring the contribution of staff and volunteers of Mercy University Hospital!

A very special night was held on the 6th September in the Cork City Gaol. The inaugural **Mercy Stars Awards**, an exciting new initiative developed by the Mercy Hospital Foundation recognized the important role played by staff and volunteers, across the hospital. The Winners were presented with a specially commissioned Mercy Star from Keanes Jewellers, with special guest **Norah Casey**, former Dragon, Newstalk broadcaster and CEO of Harmonia Publishing, officiating at the event.

The Mercy Stars Awards offered patients and their families, as well as staff in the hospital, the opportunity to nominate the people who have made a difference in their lives- nurses, doctors, porters, care attendants- any staff member at Mercy University Hospital who has played a role in their hospital experience, to recognise them for their efforts for patients.

Micheal Sheridan, CEO of the Mercy Foundation said *"The Awards were a huge success. We had so many nominations, making it a real celebration of the individuals that work tirelessly at Mercy University Hospital for patients and their families in Munster. These people nominated are shining examples of dedication, leadership and innovation, role models of professionalism, courtesy, caring and compassion. We were thrilled to be able to honour the winners on the night, as the roles they play are so important to the hospital. We were also delighted to acknowledge the work of those volunteers who give unselfishly of their time to fundraise for the Hospital. It is through their dedication and hard work that funds are raised to support the invaluable work in the Hospital"*

Mercy Star Recipients 2013

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| The Catherine McAuley Lifetime Achievement Award: | Sr. Felicitas |
| Doctor of the Year: | Dr. Carl Vaughan |
| Nurse of the Year: | Peggy O'Keeffe |
| Student Nurse of the Year: | Karen O'Halloran* |
| Allied Health Professional of the Year: | Avril Hallahan |
| Healthcare Team of the Year - Clinical: | Nurses of the Warfarin Clinic |
| Team of the Year - Non Clinical: | Canteen Team in the Catering Dept |
| Patient Services Ambassador of the Year: | John Mescall, Portering |
| Volunteer Fundraiser of the Year: | Denis O'Donovan |
| Volunteer-organised Event of the Year: | Make Your Mark on Cancer Walk |
| Our Hero of the Year: | Brendan Heffernan |

**Karen was also presented with a bursary by Chairman of the Foundation Mr. Jerry Flynn who very generously provided an Education Bursary to the value of €2,000 for the winner.*

The Awards were kindly sponsored by **Quintas Wealth Management** and **TOSHMedical**

For all of our latest news and events, please keep an eye on our website – www.mercyfundraising.ie



Congratulations to the MUH Warfarin Team



Congratulations to the Canteen Team (Catering Dept.)

Introducing: Mary Lucey, Nurse Endoscopist



A new innovation at Mercy University Hospital, supported by the Department of Nursing and under the mentorship of Dr. Martin Buckley, Clinical Lead, Gastroenterology led to the development of the first Nurse Endoscopist role at MUH.

Mary Lucey of St. Oliver's Ward embraced this opportunity and here she shares her story with Mercy Times

"Working with the endoscopy team in St. Oliver's is very interesting and led to a desire to increase my knowledge/working ability in the gastroenterology field. In 2011, I commenced a Graduate Diploma in Gastroenterology with flexible sigmoidoscopy through Hull University in the UK. The course is structured around distance learning, online tutorials via webcam and the occasional visit to Hull University. The course content which is very specific to endoscopy provided the opportunity to have practical experience and training in order to carry out sigmoidoscopies. The practical training consisted of one-to-one consultant gastroenterologist supervision. I began by observing procedures, subsequently progressing to endoscopy withdrawal and eventually to endoscope insertion under supervision. Competency forms were required for each sigmoidoscopy/colonoscopy performed and I have completed approximately 350-400 scopes in the last two years.

Having completed my practical course I am currently in the last year of my Masters in Colonoscopy with Hull University which will finish in May 2014. Completion of the practical courses have given me the ability to carry out full colonoscopies independently and I now have 1-2 evening lists a weeks while also attending the Lower GI multidisciplinary meetings and the outpatient department in order to follow up on patient care. With my course and the development of this role, I am now an independent practitioner and on the Clinical Nurse Specialist pathway to becoming an Advanced Nurse Practitioner within the healthcare team to provide quality patient care. I would like to thank all at Mercy University Hospital and the staff in St. Oliver's ward for their continuing support."

Introducing: Dr Gavin O'Brien, Consultant Vascular Surgeon

I am delighted to have just taken up a post in Mercy University Hospital as a General Surgeon with a special interest in Vascular and Endovascular surgery.

I was born and bred in Cork and graduated from UCC in 1999. I did my junior surgical training scheme in the CUH and was lucky enough to spend my first house officer job under the guidance of the outstanding vascular surgeon and gentleman – the late Mr. Joe O'Donnell. Mr. O'Donnell was a truly inspirational character and within three weeks I had decided upon pursuing a vascular surgical career, and I remain thankful to him to this day.



In 2002/3, I took a year out of surgical training to perform an MD in UCC, and then proceeded with my higher surgical training, rotating through several hospitals in Dublin. After finishing my training in Ireland in 2009, I moved to Sydney and started working in the Vascular Department of the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. Some may know this as the hospital which hosts the famous 'fly-on-the-wall' TV show called 'RPA' - although this was not my motivation to go there! Interestingly, the RPA hospital was named, indirectly, due to the actions of another Irishman. Henry James O'Farrell, variously referred to as a 'mad Fenian' and 'Irish fanatic', attempted to assassinate the visiting Prince Alfred, second son of Queen Victoria, in 1868. It was of great concern to the good citizens of Sydney that the Queen's son should be injured in their city and so O'Farrell was hanged without ceremony at Darlinghurst Gaol three weeks later. The Queen donated a large amount of money to rebuild the hospital which nursed her son back to health – the hospital then becoming renamed as The Royal Prince Alfred. Perhaps it is not too surprising then that I was the first Irish surgeon to be warmly welcomed to the RPA vascular surgery department!

My motivation to travel to the RPA was based on my desire to work alongside the legendary Professor Geoffrey White, one of the founding fathers of endovascular surgery (i.e. keyhole vascular surgery). Geoff placed the first bifurcated endovascular graft to successfully treat an abdominal aortic aneurysm in a human in 1993, and in so doing, instantly changed the practice of future vascular surgeons throughout the world. He had designed and made the aortic graft himself and that design has essentially remained unchanged over the past 20 years. The RPA continues to be a leading global centre for innovation in endovascular surgery and I will always treasure the invaluable three years I worked there.

Ultimately, after three years abroad, and with an expanding clan, I found it too hard to resist a return to 'De Banks'! I look forward to working in MUH, and in particular to striving towards delivery of endovascular therapies for the vascular patients of Cork.

Farewell

Retirement of Masie O'Mahony

On Wednesday, May 15th, family, friends and colleagues joined in a celebration for Masie O'Mahoney, Health Care Assistant, who retired from the Department of Nursing in January.

Masie worked in "the Mercy" since 1982, in the night kitchen, Private Corridors and in recent years in the Emergency Department. During her time in MUH, Masie has witnessed many changes and developments and takes with her kind and fond memories.

A dedicated staff member, Masie worked hard in ensuring that our patients were always top priority. Therefore, to show our appreciation Masie was presented with a special gift and a bouquet of flowers. We wish her a long and happy retirement and every best wish for the next chapter of her life.



A Lifetime of Achievement: Sr. Felicitas

Sr. Felicitas was the first recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award at the inaugural Mercy Stars ceremony held on September 6th. Mercy University Hospital, together with the MUH Foundation, were honoured to acknowledge Sr. Felicitas and a life of dedicated service to this hospital, its patients and its people

Early Life

Sr. Felicitas (Ellen O'Sullivan) was born on March 29th 1932, the 3rd child of Jack and Margaret O'Sullivan at Ahilnane, near Castletown, Kenneigh in West Cork.

From an early age she showed great interest in learning and always applied herself eagerly to studies. She attended Ballineen National School and from there went on to complete her Leaving Certificate at Presentation Convent Secondary School in Bandon.

Vocation

Following her early education, she trained as a General Nurse at the South Infirmary entering the Mercy Convent, St. Maries of the Isles in 1954, making her final profession in 1957. For a short time after this she worked in the children's ward at the Mercy Hospital before taking up duty as Ward Sister of St. Patrick's Male Surgical Ward, a position she held for more than 40 years.

Service

It was during this time that Sr. Felicitas became renowned for her diligence to duty and devotion to her patients whom she cared for with exceptional kindness and compassion. She was well known for returning late at night to the ward to check on a patient causing her worry or concern, before going to bed herself.

Sr. Felicitas was an excellent clinician in her field of male surgical nursing, often diagnosing by just looking at or placing a hand on the abdomen of her patient.

She was a great teacher on the ward and many nurses, and indeed doctors, will testify to her special skill in this area. It is a sign of the person she is, the way former patients, their relatives, former work colleagues and indeed her family speak of her remarkable understanding of the way life is for them at any given time.

Sr. Felicitas has dedicated her life's work to Mercy University Hospital and is never "off duty" – still keeping an eye on the hospital's work today and is a familiar figure to staff throughout. She has always had a great sense of ownership of the Mercy and signifies all that is special about it – it's homely, warm and caring environment.



Rest in Peace: Roma Duane



There was great sadness and disbelief when the news filtered through that Roma had passed away. She had worked in the Emergency Department for several years and was a very important part of the team.

Roma was best described as a woman with great loyalty, trust and love for her family, friends and colleagues.

If you were off for a few days leave or off sick, the first thing upon your return, she would give you a hug and say she missed you and remark how well you looked. No matter how tired, cranky or bad someone felt she would make your day. Fondly known by all the ED staff as our "second Mammy", Roma was the one regular person coming on shift that would brighten up any dismal day. She loved her job and took it very seriously and she would always make time to help patients or staff if they needed anything as she passed by.

Love and missed by all in the Emergency Department, Noonan's Staff and Mercy colleagues.

May she rest in peace. Our thoughts are with her daughter Donna and her family. They are in our prayers.

Vicky's Christmas Pudding



110gm / 4oz	Butter	110 gm / 4 oz	Breadcrumbs
55gm / 2 oz	Plain Flour	55gm / 2 oz	Ground Almonds
110gm / 4 oz	Raisins	2	Eggs
110gm / 4 oz	Sultanas	½ tsp	Nutmeg
55gm / 2 oz	Mixed Peel	½ tsp	Mixed Spice
110gm / 4oz	Brown Sugar	1	Cooking Apple, (Grated)
½ Can	Guinness		
1 Glass of	Whiskey or Brandy		

Place all the Dry ingredients, (except the sugar), in a large Mixing Bowl. Pour over the Whiskey, (Or Brandy), and mix well. Leave to stand overnight.

Beat the butter and sugar together until smooth and creamy. Add this, and the eggs, to the other ingredients, which have been standing overnight.

Place the mixture in a well-greased 2lb pudding bowl. Cover with two well greased pieces of greaseproof paper making sure there is a fold across the middle. Place a double layer of tin foil, secured with string, or alternatively the lid of a pudding bowl on top.

Place the pudding bowl into a large saucepan half filled with water. Bring the water to the boil, and then reduce to a very gentle simmer for 6 hours. Check regularly to ensure the water doesn't boil off, top up with water if required.

After the cooking time has elapsed remove the bowl from the water. Remove the lid and greaseproof paper and allow the pudding to cool down completely.

When cold, re-cover as before with fresh paper and store until required. On Christmas morning you can reheat the pudding by steaming in a large saucepan of water (as per the cooking method) until thoroughly heated through, or if you want to cheat, use a microwave!

Enjoy & Happy Christmas everybody.....



We wish to express our thanks to everyone who submitted articles, information and / or photos for this edition. If you have something to submit for a subsequent issue, please contact any member of the Editorial Committee.

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