MERCY UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL, CORK LIMITED

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Mercy times

Congratulations Margaret!

In August, Mercy University Hospital (MUH) was delighted to learn that Margaret McKiernan was appointed to the post of Chief Executive Officer (CEO).



Margaret is a well-known and familiar face to all in MUH as she has been a part of our Mercy community for over 20 years, most recently serving as the hospital's Director of Nursing. Margaret brings to the role, of CEO, a wealth of knowledge and experience which will ensure and enhance the continuum of effective and excellent healthcare delivered by Mercy University Hospital to the people of Cork and beyond.

Mercy Times took the opportunity to congratulate Margaret on her appointment and to chat with her. By way of introduction, Margaret shared some of her background and experience, and her vision for leading the hospital in future developments.

Margaret brings over 26 years of experience in the acute hospital sector to the role of CEO. With a distinguished career spanning clinical and leadership roles in Ireland and the UK, Margaret who is a Registered General Nurse, with a clinical background in Intensive Care nursing, holds a Diploma in ICU/CCU, a BSc and an MSc. Most recently, she successfully completed the Florence Nightingale Foundation Scholarship Programme 2022 to 2023.

Margaret began her nursing career in the UK and worked in a number of clinical roles in London and Dublin before returning to Cork to work in CUH in both General and Cardiothoracic ICU. In 2002, she joined Mercy University Hospital, as a Clinical Nurse Manager 3 in the Intensive Care Unit, moving into the role of Assistant Director of Nursing where she led out on a number of initiatives including the implementation of the Hospice Friendly Hospitals (HfH) programme which focuses on excellence in End-of-Life Care as well as the first rollout of the National Early Warning Score system.

In 2016 Margaret was appointed as Director of Nursing with responsibility for all aspects of the professional leadership and management of the Department of Nursing in MUH.

In her role as Director of Nursing, Margaret has played a key role in the executive management of the hospital, overseeing capital developments and the patient experience pathway. Margaret's key focus is always on the best and safest care possible for patients while also recognising the importance of supporting and empowering staff in this care delivery.

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There is more inside…

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- ***Recognition, Congratulations and Welcomes!***

Margaret's specialist and research interests are in the areas of healthcare communication, end of life care and inclusion health. She represents acute hospitals nationally on the HSE/ IHF Oversight Group and is the acute hospital representative in Cork on the LGBTI+ Interagency Group and the Trauma Informed Cities Working Group.

Speaking about her appointment, Ms McKiernan said; "*I am honoured to take up this position and to lead Mercy University Hospital into its next chapter. My commitment is to build upon our strong foundation of compassionate, patient-centred care while embracing innovation and collaboration to best serve our community into the future. Ireland's growing and ageing population bring with it increasing demands in terms of complexity of illness and co-morbidities. We need to future proof the services delivered by firstly maximising our current site and off-site units, as well as designing new additional patient care space, including additional bed capacity.*"

Spotlight| The Role of the ANP



Congratulations L-R Sharon Crowley, Mercy Injury Unit, Aimee Dempsey, Mercy Injury Unit, Clara Minihane, Acute Medicine, Linda McCarthy, Diabetes, Caitriona O'Sullivan, Inflammatory Bowel Disease.

What is an ANP?

The first Registered Advanced Nurse Practitioner - ANP (R-ANP) in Ireland was in 2002 (22 years ago), yet the role remains ambiguous and a little misunderstood. The R-ANP role is a single point of contact for the patient involving holistic assessment, diagnosis, autonomous decision-making and providing a full episode of care, within their service, as part of the inter-disciplinary team. Ireland has currently 968 RANP/RAMPs and the Irish Government policy has set a target of having 2-3% of the nursing workforce performing at an advanced level within both Nursing and Midwifery in the coming years.

Growth in this area of advancing nurses has been well supported by visionaries within the MUH with ideas emerging from the nurses themselves, from senior managers, nurse leaders, consultants, and stakeholders.

Scope of Work

The ANP works within a scope defined by their experience and field under the professional guidance of the Director of Nursing and clinical guidance of a consultant. An ANP can see, treat, prescribe medication, refer for diagnostic tests and discharge patients in a holistic manner. Subsequently, an ANP can increase patient throughput, reduce waiting times, and improve patient flow through their service and prevent co-morbidities, supporting hospital avoidance. ANPs support a safe environment for patients by increasing the use of evidence-based clinical guidelines and part of the role involves research and policy/ pathway development. Their overall positive effect on patient care, other staff, and the health services in general is very apparent.

Let us introduce ...

Picture above are the newest Mercy University Hospital Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANPs), who graduated on October 29th having completed a MSc. in Advanced Practice Nursing in UCC. Together with their new qualification, each ANP already has substantial clinical expertise and experience in their particular fields.

Award Season!

Gold Standard – Happy Hearts

Fuelling a productive and healthy workforce! The MUH Catering Team have been awarded the Gold Standard in the Happy Heart Healthy Eating Award. The Award is part of a collaboration between the Irish Heart Foundation and HSE Ireland focused on making the healthier choice the easier choice. Congratulations to everyone involved in making this happen!





Special Merit - Better Buildings Awards 2024

Mercy University Hospital was nominated for the Cork Business Association Better Buildings Award 2024. Specifically, it was the MUH (Entrance) which was a finalist in the category – Best in Heritage, Conservation and Sustainability.

It was a highly competitive category including the Munster Technological University (MTU) School of Art and the newly refurbished Cancer Care Centre (MUHF), who were the overall winner. MUH did win a Special merit award and all the winners and shortlisted finalists were acknowledged for their work as "a testament to the dynamic growth of Cork City".





Shane O'Donnell, Technical Services Officer and Robert Reynolds, Engineer, receiving the Award.

Certificate of Achievement - Procurement

Since May 2023, when the DGD shredding bins were introduced to Mercy University Hospital, the hospital has recycled 38,265kg of paper in the last eight months of 2023 alone. This effort equates to 651 trees – an impressive average of over 81 trees each month. Recycled paper and cardboard are transformed into new products like paper, toilet paper, tissues, kitchen roll and feminine hygiene products, significantly reducing deforestation supporting sustainability. To acknowledge this great achievement and ongoing work, our Procurement Team received a Certificate of Achievement.

Remember: While going paperless is ideal, we encourage everyone to dispose of paper in the shredding bins to be recycled. Equally important is that only paper goes in these bins as other items can contaminate the contents and hinder the recycling process.

Acceptable items for the shredding bin:

- Office paper of all kinds – staples or paper clips are ok
- Coloured Paper
- Envelopes – both with and without the plastic windows
- Exercise books and textbooks
- Newspapers and magazines



Pictured: Louise Tsang, Business Development Manager, DGD Shredding presenting Certificate of Achievement to Yvonne Quinn, Procurement Officer, on behalf of MUH.

Avoid putting the following in the Shredding bin:

- Wet paper
- Food waste
- Food wrappers
- Electronics / Batteries
- Clinical Waste
- Sharps
- Glass
- Office Supplies
- USB sticks

Awareness - Information - Education

Awareness, Information and Education Days are special dates in the calendar dedicated to raising awareness of issues that affect the lives of our patients and to also support our staff. These days can be global, national, or local or more niche and focused. These days also provide an opportunity for staff to gain more insight into their colleagues work and can also be fun and inspirational with quizzes and prizes to match! Below is just a taste of some of the days, in the latter half of 2024 that have been hosted by our dedicated staff across all disciplines …..

Sanctuary Hospital Training Day

Mercy University Hospital hosted its first Sanctuary Hospital Training Day on September 25th under the theme of "Safe Equitable Care for all". The day brought together many of MUH's sanctuary partners as the hospital continues in its tradition of over 160 years in meeting the needs of the community it serves. Topics covered included Trauma Informed Care, Human Trafficking (Know it, See it, Say it), Social Inclusion and Domestic Violence. Staff from across all disciplines attended this vital Training Day.



Delirium Testing

Do you know the 4Ats? This was the question posed by the Mercy's multidisciplinary team as part of positive ageing week in October. Education, information and training was provided for staff on the Rapid Clinical Test for Delerium.



The Patient Safety (Notifiable Incidents and Open Disclosure) Act 2023

The Patient Safety (Notifiable Incidents and Open Disclosure) Act 2023 became law on 26th September 2024. Open Disclosure Trainers Christina Favier, Tara Friel, and Tracey Dineen in conjunction with Mary Barry, MUH Risk Manager, facilitated an information stand on the Act which included information on staff supports following a notifiable incident.



World Stroke Day

Did you know that Stroke is the third leading cause of death in the world. On World Stroke Day (October 29th), led by Clinical Nurse Specialist, Mary Murphy, the Mercy's multidisciplinary team marked the day with an information stand and quiz emphasising the importance of stroke prevention, treatment and care.



16 Days!

MUH supported the Global 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence which ran between November 11th to December 10th. MUH was delighted to support this initiative, in partnership with our local NGO's, including the Sexual Assault Treatment Unit, Cork Sexual Violence Centre, An Garda Siochana, Mna Feasa etc.



Congratulations



Long Service Pins

During Mercy Week celebrations Mercy University Hospital is delighted to honour and acknowledge the long service commitment of staff to "The Mercy". At total of 8 staff were acknowledged for 30 years of service whilst 40 members of staff reached 20 years' service with a further 26 members of staff receiving 10-year Pins.

Pins were presented, by MUH CEO, Margaret McKiernan, at a dedicated function. Congratulations everyone on reaching these important milestones.



Managing People Skills

Congratulations to the "Class of 24" who have completed the Managing People Skills Programme. This programme is completed across 4 sessions comprising modules with vital skills, tools and techniques underpinned by the Mercy Values of Respect, Excellence, Compassion, Justice and Team Spirit. Staff are pictured with Laura Quinlan (HR) and Margaret McCormack (Course Creator and Facilitator).



Team Laura

Congratulations to our colleague, Laura Ahern (pictured with the Bed Management Team) on her Gold Medal in the Artistic and Rhythmic Gymnastics in Oslo recently.

Laura has been a member of the Owenabue Special Olympics Gymnastics Club for over 12 years and all her hard work has paid off!

End of Life Care Update

The MUH End of Life Care Co-ordinator, Edel O'Neill, updated Mercy Times on supports that have been introduced in the hospital over the last year.

Age-appropriate Children's Pack

The death of someone close affects many aspects of children and young people's lives. Adults may question whether children should be visiting someone dying out of concern for the child's wellbeing. It is important for healthcare professionals to consider any child who may be affected by the death of a loved one and to engage with the family. Talking to children about death is never easy, children handle grief better when adults around them get support.



Our aim is to support adults providing the option for children to visit a loved one at end of life by creating a safe environment for children to be present and comfortable. With the introduction of age-appropriate packs our aim is to make the child feel comfortable in an unfamiliar situation. What really matters is the child's experience and how they make sense of what is happening and providing a memory for children to grow up knowing that they have been included.



A Lunch and Learn was held in May 2024 by the EOLC Coordinator and the Medical Social Work Department providing Education training on communicating with children and young adults. We also launched our children's packs and our updated Supporting Children when someone close is dying booklet. Thanks to the MUH Foundation for their ongoing support of End of Life Care initiatives.

Paired Hearts

These paired Hearts are offered to patients nearing end of life and to their families – one for the patient to keep and hold and one for their loved one. We are especially delighted that the Sisters of Mercy, led by Sr. Margaret Kiely and Sr. Judy Dineen, have supported the hospital with this initiative and have gathered volunteers to design and create the Hearts.



The following feedback was received from the hospital's Palliative Care specialists: "*I just wanted to let you know how much of a success the paired hearts are proving to be, alongside the poem that goes with them. I have used them on many occasions now, and each and every person who I had the privilege of giving them to have been touched. In my experiences people find different meaning and get different things from them. I have regularly used multiple hearts for one patient, often for grandchildren, sometimes for family who are away and the hearts have served to connect them. I find that often families like to pick out their own hearts because they find some meaning/connection in a colour or pattern.*

So well done on the introduction of them to the hospital, when I learned about them first, I did think it was a great idea but in my experience of using them it was an underestimation."



If you would like to volunteer to make hearts, please contact Edel O'Neill EOLC Coordinator eoneill@muh.ie

Mass of Rememberance

The annual MUH Mass of Rememberance was held at St.Augustine's Church on Sunday November 10th 2024 for all deceased patients od MUH. Each bereaved family received a personal invitation to the service.



Go Live

National Incident Management System (NIMS) Electronic Point of Entry

The Quality and Risk Management Department (QRMD) were delighted to announce the introduction of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Electronic Point of Entry on October 14th.

What is it?

Until now, Mercy University Hospital have used a paper-based system to report incidents, which were then manually entered into NIMS. To enhance the quality and safety of care, NIMS now offers a comprehensive incident management solution, allowing services to manage incidents throughout their lifecycle on a single platform.
A key advantage of this national platform is system-wide learning. Incidents that seem isolated within one service may be occurring on a larger scale in other services. Frontline staff can now report incidents directly into the National Incident Management System, eliminating the need for paper reporting.
Benefits

The Benefits of ePOE include:

- Real time data on incident occurrences/ near-misses
- User-friendly, intuitive, reliable system
- Initiates prompt for review & risk mitigation processes
- Supports the monitoring of KPIs in patient safety
- Eliminates duplication of work
- Eliminates common issue of illegibility in incident reporting
- No licence fees



Mercy on the Move



The New Year is here, and with it comes to the opportunity to start fresh and build healthier habits for the rest of the year.

Movement in any form is beneficial for your health so it is important to ensure it fits into your life. Whether you are trying to achieve personal bests, or maybe just begin to form a positive habit conducive to your own self-care, setting consistent yet simple sustainable goals can bring long term benefits.

Each month builds on the last, so creating routines that stick and transform how you approach your health are key.

Success starts with clear and actionable goals that suit you. Using a **SMART** tool can assist you with building this base.

Specific – Think of an activity that you would enjoy. Set yourself a target to build on for example, some form of movement every day, being conscious of your daily steps, walking to places when you can, take the stairs instead of the lift, go for walks with family and friends, making your activity social.

Measurable – Track your progress with specific milestones, whether that be hitting a specific step goal, joining a fitness class you've always wanted to try, taking up a new activity and having it become part of your daily routine.

Achievable – Start with where you are and build with goals that are ambitious but realistic. We all know how busy life can get, but you can achieve anything if you put your mind to it, stay focused and remind yourself of why you are doing it and the long terms benefits attached to what you are doing.

Relevant – Align your goals with what matters most to you – whether it's improving energy, reducing stress, or building consistency.

Time-bound – Set a specific time frame, for example one month, which will give you structure and focus to succeed. The work you put in now, will assist you with becoming a better version of yourself.

Regular exercise can help slow the body's aging process; your older self will thank the younger you in years to come!

Please contact Cleo at *cdavies@muh.ie* if you want to contribute to Mercy on the Move

The Mercy Way

Pilgrimage

In September, six student nurses, from Mercy University Hospital travelled to Lourdes as part of the Cork and Ross Diocesan Pilgrimage. Caoimhe Moloney recently shared their experience with Mercy Times.

"We travelled to Cork Airport for what we expected to be an exciting week ahead. Upon our arrival, we were handed itineraries outlining the schedule and activities for the week, giving us a clear picture of what to expect. Our work began immediately, on arrival at the airport. We were tasked with counting and assisting the pilgrims as they arrived, helping to organize their boarding passes and luggage.

Daily Life

Our days were structured around our assigned shifts, with an early shift starting at 7 a.m. and a later one beginning at 1 p.m. The morning shift began with waking the assisted pilgrims for breakfast, providing patient care, and helping them down to the day room for their meal. Mass started around 9 a.m., and the youth group would assist us in escorting everyone to the church. After Mass, we would sit down for a cup of tea with the assisted pilgrims, enjoying some time to chat and listen to their stories. Many of their stories were incredibly moving and left a lasting impression on us.

In the afternoons, we would often visit the grotto to reflect and spend some quiet time. Afterward, we'd take the assisted pilgrims into town to shop for souvenirs, followed by a coffee and cake in a local café. Once we returned, we'd have dinner and give the assisted pilgrims some time to rest. Finally, in the evenings, we'd all gather in the day room to chat and share stories. Before long, a sing-along would begin, with both young and old getting up to perform. It was a wonderful source of entertainment for the assisted pilgrims and created a warm, joyful atmosphere.



Six students

Inspirational People

During my time in Lourdes, I met some of the most selfless and inspiring people. Many of them return year after year, not as pilgrims, but to volunteer and help the assisted pilgrims. I encountered individuals with fascinating stories, and others who shared the rich history of Lourdes. The assisted pilgrims themselves were unforgettable characters who left a lasting impression on me. They were some of the kindest and most grateful people I've ever met.

Renewal and Reconnection

For many of the pilgrims, Lourdes is an annual pilgrimage, a place they return to for healing and hope. Talking to them, I realized that Lourdes offers more than just a spiritual journey it's a chance for renewal. Some come to reflect, to take a break from their everyday lives, and to reconnect with what truly matters. This sense of purpose and peace is something that stayed with me long after I left.
Lourdes is a stunning town, full of life and energy, with plenty of charming cafés and cozy restaurants to explore. My favourite place in Lourdes was the grotto. The stillness there, despite the many people around, was deeply moving, it gave me chills every time.

I would wholeheartedly recommend that student nurses take part in the pilgrimage with the Cork and Ross Diocese. It's an experience full of learning and growth, offering insights we often miss in the rush of daily life. Sometimes, the most valuable lessons come when we take a step back, slow down, and reflect."

Project Mercy| The Next Generation!

In early October, the MUH Mission & Values Lead, Siobhan Kenny, received a unique interview request! Nina Dunphy and Sarah Woodward, both fifth class pupils of Eglantine School requested the interview as part of their Cork History Project. Nina and Sarah chose Mercy University Hospital for their project, thanks in part to Nina's Grandfather, Brian Dunphy, who is a member of the Board of the Mercy Foundation, and a curiosity about a rich and unique history that stretches across 16 decades. There was lots to talk about and share. Congratulations to Nina and Sarah on their project.



Medical Humanities| "Spectators"

Dr Samuel (Sam) McGreal recently won the 2024 Professor Davis Coakley Award at the Irish Gerontological Society for his painting "Spectators". Sam was an intern in Geriatric Medicine here at MUH between July and October 2024 and Mercy Times was fortunate to catch up with him to congratulate him and to chat about his Award and the thought process behind his painting.

Professor Davis Coakley

Professor Davis Coakley (1946–2022) was a renowned academic geriatrician of international stature who played a pivotal role in advancing geriatric medicine across Ireland. Thanks to his visionary leadership, geriatric medicine has grown to become the largest medical subspecialty in the country. He contributed greatly to the advancement of geriatric medicine as a speciality across Ireland and he key contributor to the development of the Irish Gerontological Society (IGS).

Throughout his life, Professor Coakley also promoted integration of medicine and the humanities, combining his personal interest in the arts with his distinguished career in medicine. To honour Professor Coakley's legacy, the Davis Coakley Award has been established and will be awarded at IGS Annual Scientific Meeting commencing from 2023 onwards. Submissions may include anything inspired by the theme of aging from poem to sculpture to painting and may be based on the theme of the conference of that year.

Inspiration

The theme of the 2024 IGS meeting held in Athlone was 'Gerontology in a Dynamic World: Systems, Challenges, Innovations' and I thought of all the advances made in medicine and indeed gerontology in recent years. From great leaps in gene therapy to the possible use of biomarkers in diagnosis of Parkinson's disease and beyond.

However, I also cast a thought to my elderly granduncles, Diarmuid and Mick, retired bachelor sheep farmers who hail from Lispole, County Kerry. The brothers live in a small, three-room bungalow, nestled against the backdrop of the Strickeen mountain, where wind-bent holly trees embrace the home, shielding it from the worst of the elements.

Both are functional independent and seldom venture into nearby Dingle to get groceries or just to take a glimpse at the world. Despite there being some doctors in their close family, they have never sought nor accepted medical advice. In fact, the only medical advance they did make was in 1980. The brothers used to fry everything for every meal, in a rustic, black cast iron pan. This was the way until a neighbour, John Sullivan, informed them of a revelation he found in the Kerryman, that fried food is generally not good for one, and that the higher cholesterol is 'bad for one's heart'. That same day in 1980, Diarmuid and Mick took the frying pan out to the garden, dug a 3-foot hole and buried it, never to be seen again. They boil everything in the same pot ever since.

The Spectators

When not eating modest meals, the pair sit out in the living room, and read from the ever-increasing stack of newspapers in the centre of the table, or listen to one of the three working radios they have in the room. Often when we or another family member visit, the discussion is lightly based around current affairs, local news, or the weather. These soft words fall on walls present since the early 1800s, and the harsher topics of the day never truly penetrate into their sanctuary.



"Spectators" by Samuel McGreal

I tried to create this image as much as I could in art form. While the house may not be as tidy in real life as is portrayed in the picture, one still gets a sense for the simplicity of life these brothers lead. Light comes filtered into the house through the soft veil, with newspapers, the radio and most importantly local talk being their contact medium with the outside world. As current affairs change and advances are made, the brothers live on, and are content in being... "spectators".

Medical humanities show a deeper understanding of the way our patients live and their journey in illness. In 2025, the Irish Gerontological Society (IGS) annual scientific meeting will be held in Killarney, Co Kerry. Details of the meeting and the Professor Davis Coakley Award for 2025 will be posted on the website

www.irishgerontology.com



Mercy Moments

Mercy Day

September 24th is a very important date in the Mercy diary as it was on this date in 1827, the foundress of the Mercy Order, Catherine McAuley dedicated the first house of Mercy (on Baggot Street) thus bringing to life The Mercy Way. We, together with our wider Mercy family, dedicate this time to celebrating "being Mercy" – honouring the past, present and future and affording us, as a healthcare provider, the opportunity to reflect on our Vision, Mission and Values.

Mercy Day Mass, which pays tribute to Catherine McAuley, the Sisters of Mercy and all Mercy colleagues, past and present was celebrated by Bishop Fintan Gavin, on September 19th.







Cultural Diversity Day

47 nationalities work at MUH. On September 18th MUH celebrated our rich cultural diversity through food, music and dance with great opportunities for everyone to sit, chat, understand, appreciate and gain new perspectives about each other. Staff were also invited to peg their country of origin on our Mercy Map, and there was a competition to test everyone's geography skills!

Mercy Heroes

On Friday, October 18th, in the miserable rain, 9 heroic Cork City Fire Brigade probationers, accompanied by their officers, took to the streets of Cork City to haul a 10 tonne 1949 Denis Wheeled Escape from the Fire Station at Anglesea Street to Mercy University Hospital. They did this to show support to Teen and Young Adult patients who battle illness and the staff of MUH who care for them. The firefighters were welcomed, on arrival, by MUH CEO, Margaret McKiernan and staff.





Therapy Dogs

The team in ICU were delighted to welcome Rodger the therapy dog who recently paid a visit to patients and staff!

Therapy dogs have been extensively studied for their positive effects in healthcare settings including reduced stress and anxiety, improved mood, pain reduction and enhanced socialisation and improved physiological measures. Overall, research consistently supports the beneficial effects of therapy dogs in healthcare settings, making them valuable adjuncts to traditional medical care.

Nursing Students – Graduation Ceremony





Mercy University Hospital (MUH) celebrated the graduation of its newest cohort of nurses on November 13th. To mark this wonderful milestone, a Graduation Mass was held in the chapel followed by a reception in the Drawing Room. MUH is proud to welcome the newest graduates to its ranks and they, in turn, are eager to contribute to the hospital's mission of providing high-quality, patient-centred care.

MUH CEO, Margaret McKiernan, commented, *"These graduates embody the unwavering dedication and commitment required to excel in the nursing profession. Their achievement is a testament to their hard work and perseverance, and we are incredibly proud to celebrate this milestone with them."*

The Mass was celebrated by Fr. Pat McCarthy and music was provided by Ger Gunne and Michael Bradley with participation from the Nursing Graduates throughout the ceremony. The Graduates were also presented with their Mercy Graduation Badge and a hospital Scroll, to mark the occasion.

Clinical Commencement Ceremony 2024| BSc Nursing and Midwifery

The Year 1 BSc Nursing and Midwifery students in the School of Nursing and Midwifery in UCC recently attended a Clinical Commencement Ceremony to celebrate a very important milestone in their student journey ahead of their first clinical placement. At the ceremony, students were reminded that being a student nurse or student midwife comes with a responsibility to exemplify professionalism and a commitment to caring.

MUH Assistant Director of Nursing Ms Martina Hughes, delivered the keynote address at the Nursing Ceremony on behalf of Health Care Partners. In November and December BSc Year 1 Nursing students across the four undergraduate programmes (General Nursing, Mental Health Nursing, Intellectual Disability Nursing and Children's and General Integrated Nursing) commenced their first clinical placements across the Munster region, including at the Mercy University Hospital, Bons Secours Hospital, Cope Foundation, Mental Health Services, South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital, Cork University Hospital, Mallow General Hospital as well as community and older adult services across Munster.

Martina shared the following words of advice as this group began the next vital stage of their training:
The essence of Nursing is human interaction and in our world of technology that element is irreplaceable. Individualised patient care is a very familiar term to all of us but when a nurse arrives in a patient's space, be that a bed, chair, bench, virtual space, they bring themselves, their learning, and their new skills along and this is what individualises care. The place where care happens is a very special place. No two people or days are the same. As you progress on your journey you will meet many nurses who will influence you.

Nurse influencers are:
The organised and kind CNM2.
The progressive and focused Oncology CNS.
The night staff who hold your hand and say you never looked better.
And many more…

Nurse Exchange Programme | Magnet Annual Collaboration

On September 30th, 2024, two nurses from Northwestern Medicine Lake Forest Hospital, Ms. Kerry Wanner and Ms. Katherine Olesky, visited Mercy University Hospital as part of the Magnet Annual Collaboration Nurses Exchange Programme 2024. This program provides an invaluable opportunity for both hospitals to engage in a crosscultural exchange of knowledge, best practice learning, and nursing leadership strategies, with a particular focus on Magnet recognition standards.

During their time at MUH they spent time in critical areas such as ICU and the Emergency Department, met with Clinical Nurse Specialists, and End of Life Care Co-ordinator.

Both Kerry and Katherine remarked on the depth and richness of the nursing culture at MUH – the patient-centred approach, teamwork and the compassionate end of life care provided at MUH. They appreciated the warm welcome they received and intend to present on their experience to their own hospital upon their return.



Working in Partnership | An Garda Siochána



MUH Garda Clinic

As part of MUH's commitment to Hospital Watch, Garda Peter O'Riordan regularly facilitates a dedicated MUH Garda Clinic, on site. The Garda Clinic promotes best safety and security practices, raises awareness of crime prevention and enables education and learning on maintaining personal safety and security.

Garda Peter O Riordan has been promoted to the rank of Sergeant and will be leaving us towards the end of January 2025. We wish Peter the best of luck and thank him sincerely for his service to Mercy University Hospital.

Community

Developing cultural, social and local awareness forms part of the adaptation process required for registration as a nurse with the National Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland. This was our first group of candidate nurses to undergo this revised type of training.

Pictured are some of the nurse participants, together with Lorraine O'Donovan and Garda Gheorghe Rosu. Community Policing, Bridewell, Cork. Along with Karen Donnelly Nurse Practice Development Unit, as they begin exploring the County of Cork. Both George and Lorraine went to great lengths to make the nurses feel at home. A super day was had by all.

Our partnership with An Garda Siochana is hugely valuable in helping our staff feel safe, welcome, and part of our wider community. Days and joint events such as this are invaluable to us and to the nursing staff. Working collaboratively with An Garda Siochana is an essential part of our workplace environment.



Mr. John Murphy – A Tribute - "One of life's true gentlemen"



Mr. Murphy pictured at his retirement function in 2005

It was with great sadness that the staff of Mercy University Hospital, learned of the death of our first and former CEO, Mr. John Murphy on December 8th.

John Murphy, or Mr. Murphy as he was affectionately known to staff, was the public face of the Mercy Hospital and subsequently the Mercy University Hospital for over 20 years. John commenced as Secretary/Manager (as the post of CEO was previously titled) of the Hospital on 14th June 1982. Over that time, he worked with the Sisters of Mercy, consultants, nursing and paramedical staff, and the wider team in management and non-clinical services to ensure that the Hospital delivered the best quality care possible to patients.

John presided over periods of great transition, expansion, and development in and of the hospital with a calm and conscientious approach. The achievements during his period on watch were many. The Lee View Block built in the late 1990s transformed the Hospital, making it a major player in the delivery of health care services in the region and allowed for the addition of the Geriatric Medicine and Psychiatry services on site, the opening of first-class laboratory facilities, and provided space for Clinical Pharmacology/Cardiology Department. His dedication to "The Mercy" was immense and his loyalty absolute.

New Corporate Governance Structures -with MUH incorporated as a company in 2003 – along with gaining University status was an achievement John was very proud of as it was more than just a change of name, for him, it was a recognition of the advanced nature of the services, research and teaching undertaken at the Mercy University Hospital.

Beyond bricks and mortar, there are now a wide range of services that simply did not exist in the 1980s and all of which required strong leadership from John - planning, financing, organizing, fundraising, and lobbying to name just a few. John was an astute reader of the health environment, at every level, and he spared no effort in advancing the cause of Mercy University Hospital. He oversaw the arrival of ultrasound, nuclear medicine, CT scanning, exercise testing, neurophysiology, sleep apnoea service, social work service, expanded physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, dietetics, major expansion of both Outpatients Department and Emergency Department services, medical oncology, and the continued development of surgical specialisation.

He played a leading role in healthcare provision in Cork City and was a member of the Top-Level Steering Group which submitted its report "Report of the Top Level Steering Group on Acute Hospitals in Cork City" to Minister for Health and Children, Mr Micheal Martin, TD in July 2001. This report made 47 recommendations in terms of the structures, planning and funding of acute hospital services in Cork city. John has left a tremendous legacy for future Mercy generations to progress.

On a personal level, John epitomized the word gentleman, He was a quietly spoken, honorable and kind man with a good sense of humor and a great passion for Cork Hurling. John was a devoted family man and Mercy University Hospital extends heartfelt sympathies to his beloved wife Helen and their three daughters, Susan, Jane and Deborah and their extended families.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis and May he Rest in Peace.

Daisy Award Winner - Karen O'Hanlon



The DAISY Foundation was established in 1999 by members of the family of Patrick Barnes. He was 33 years old when he died of complications of the auto-immune disease ITP. The family was very impressed by the clinical care Pat's nurses provided, but what really overwhelmed them was the compassion and kindness that his nurses brought to Pat's bedside day in and day out. The nurses' sensitivity made a great difference in the Barnes' experience, and they wanted to say Thank You to nurses for the extraordinary care they provide patients and families every day. So, Pat's family created The DAISY Award® for Extraordinary Nurses. What started out as a thank you from their family to nurses has grown into a meaningful recognition program embraced by thousands of healthcare organizations around the world. We are very proud to partner with DAISY and celebrate and acknowledge our extraordinary nurses here at Mercy University Hospital.

Values Award



Congratulations **Lynn Kettunen** on receiving the 12th (joint) MUH Employee Choice Values Award. Lynn was nominated by her peers under the Values of Excellence and Team Spirit.



Congratulations **Liz Fitzpatrick** on receiving the 12th (joint) MUH Employee Choice Values Award. Liz was nominated by her peers under the Values of Excellence and Team Spirit.



Lucky for some – the 13th MUH Employee Choice Values Award was presented to **Stephen Kalman (Medical Records/Admissions)**, who was nominated under the Value of Compassion. Congratulations Stephen!

Commendations – 12th Award

Congratulations

Paul Casey *(Support Services - Porter)*
John Chalmers *(Support Services - Porter)*
Craig Clinton *(Support Services - Catering)*
Noelette Corrigan *(HCA – St. Francis Unit)*
Anna Higgins *(Service Improvement Lead)*
Tom McCullagh *(Nursing – Emergency Dept.)*
Clara Minihane *(Nursing – Emergency Dept.)*
Mary Murphy *(Nursing – CNS Stroke)*
Annette O'Regan *(Nursing – Emergency Dept)*
Esther O'Riordan *(Nursing - Radiology)*
Patricia Purcell *(HCA – St. Francis Unit)*
Susan Quinn *(Nursing – Emergency Dept.)*
Fiona Rice *(Administration – Medical Secretary)*
Archana Suresh *(Nursing – Emergency Dept)*
Niamh Tully *(Administration – Medical Records)*

Commendations – 13th Award

Congratulations

John Forde *(Nursing – St. Catherine's Ward)*
Sinead Goggin *(PA to the Director of Nursing)*
Marie Hurley *(HCA– Emergency Dept.)*
Janice Lyons *(Clerical– Household Services)*
Arun Nair *(Nursing – Emergency Dept.)*
Deirdre O'Connor *(Support to CFO)*
Roisin O'Donovan *(Admin – Medical Secretary)*
Dr Martin O'Driscoll *(Radiology)*
Anne O'Keeffe *(ANP – Emergency Dept.)*
Hannah O'Sullivan *(Nursing – AMAU)*
Gillian Prendergast *(HCA – St. John's Unit)*
Ruth Swanton *(Occupational Therapy)*
Swapna Thomas *(Nursing – Emergency Dept.)*
Niamh Wyley *(Nursing – Emergency Dept.)*

A commendation, in the form of a specially designed Certificate is awarded to the remaining nominees to acknowledge their nomination.

A Very "Mercy" Christmas!



Santa and the Lions Club

Christmas officially started at MUH on December 13th with a visit from Santa Claus, together with the Kinsale & District Lions Club who presented MUH Operations Director, Margaret Lynch with gifts and care packs for patients of our hospital. Entertainment was provided by the Band of the Southern Command and Soprano Amanda Neri.

MUH CEO Margaret McKiernan, acknowledged and thanked the volunteers at Kinsale & District Lions Club for their support, generosity and unwavering commitment to bringing holiday cheer to our patients: *"The annual Santa visit is a truly special occasion that brightens the spirits of everyone involved, from our patients on the wards to our dedicated staff who look forward to this heartwarming tradition - we are incredibly grateful for the positive impact the Lions Club has on our hospital community during the holiday season."*

Deck the Doors Competition and Winners!

The annual Deck the Doors competition was once again a great success as the hospital was turned into a Winter Wonderland thanks to the creativity, imagination and teamwork of our staff.

Congratulations to everyone who entered! Thanks to The Mercy Social Club for organising and to the Judges who had the difficult task of choosing winners – **Brendan Doyle** (MUH Chief Financial Officer), **Dr Evelyn Flanagan** (Research Manager) and **Deirdre Finn** (Interim CEO MUH Foundation).

Overall Winner
Pharmacy Department



Clinical Area (Wards, etc)
1st St. Oliver's/Endoscopy
2nd St. Bernadette's Ward
3rd St. Anthony's Ward



Non –Clinical Area (Offices, etc)
1st Catering Department
2nd Outpatient Department (Attic)
3rd Switchboard

Satellites (off site – Lancaster Hall, Coach Street etc)
1st Human Resource Department
2nd Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics
3rd Medical Secretaries (Coach Street)



Mayoral Visit

MUH was delighted to welcome Lord Mayor, Cllr Dan Boyle who visited MUH, as part of the annual Mayoral hospital visits in the city. The Lord Mayor visited several Wards, met and chatted with patients and also took the time to meet with Staff, many of whom would be working over the Christmas period. There was also time for the Mercy "Good Cup of Tea" and one of our baker Vicky's renowned Mince Pies.

Foundation Features

Critical Care Transport Trolley to enhance safety and comfort of critically ill patients

The Mercy University Hospital has welcomed the introduction of a state-of-the-art Critical Care Transport Trolley designed to ensure the safe and efficient transfer of critically ill patients.

Funded by the Mercy University Hospital Foundation at a cost of €59,214, the trolley and related equipment can be configured to meet the varying clinical needs of our patients.

Critically ill patients are transferred from 'The Mercy' on an emergency basis to critical care specialist centres and hospitals, both locally and nationally. With the new equipment in place, these emergency transfers, coordinated with the National Ambulance Service, will be safer and more timely, while maintaining the high standard of care needed during critical interventions.

Eoin Cahill, CNM3 Critical Care explained the significance of the new equipment: *"The addition of the Critical Care Transport Trolley will expedite the safe transfer of our critically ill patients to where they need to be, as quickly as possible. Time is critical in these situations, and this new equipment ensures patient safety remains our top priority."*

Deirdre Finn, Head of Fundraising and Interim CEO of the Mercy University Hospital Foundation said *"Funding the Critical Care Transport Trolley aligns with the Foundation's ongoing commitment to investing in the latest technology and equipment to improve patient experience at 'The Mercy."*



Join the first Mercy Camino this April, and help the Foundation to make a difference, one step at a time

We are delighted to share details of the first Mercy Camino, taking place this April, raising funds for the Mercy Cancer Appeal.

The seven-night trip will see 'pilgrims' complete the last 100km of the Camino de Santiago from Sarria, taking in the beautiful Spanish countryside over five walks, finishing with spectacular views of the breathtaking Cathedral of Santiago. A limited number of places remain, so we invite you to get in touch today for full details about how to get involved.

With every sign up, funds from the participant's fee are directed to our Cancer Appeal which funds vital services for patients with cancer, supporting them and their families.

If 2025 is your year for a challenge, contact Louise at *louise@mercyhospitalfoundation.ie* to learn more.



Thank you for doing something wonderful and making it a Mercy Christmas

Christmas can be a challenging time for patients and their families going through a cancer diagnosis, and the care given in the Mercy University Hospital supports them immeasurably.

Thank you to everyone who helped make it a Mercy Christmas by hosting a festive FUNdraiser, participating in a Christmas jumper day, buying your Christmas cards from the Foundation, or making a one-off donation over the holiday season.

Your support helps the Mercy Cancer Appeal continue to fund projects that improve the experiences of patients and their families.



Thank You for your Service!



Congratulations to Carol Hunter and Eileen Dalton on the occasion of their recent retirements. This significant milestone for both Carol and Eileen were marked by a special celebration as they were joined by staff across the hospital, to mark the next chapter of their lives.

May the best of happiness, honour and fortune keep with you as you are wished a very Happy Retirement.

Carol Hunter

After over 40 years of service to Mercy University Hospital, Carol Hunter, Operations Director, has retired. Carol has held the post of Operations Director since May 2018 and prior to taking up this role, Carol was a member of the Senior Nurse Management Team and held the post of Assistant Director of Nursing for over 13 years. At a special function, Carol was acknowledged for her genuine and standfast commitment to the hospital over many years and in many different roles

Eileen Dalton

After decades of dedicated service, Nurse Eileen Dalton retired from Mercy University Hospital, closing a remarkable chapter in her nursing career. Eileen was known for her compassion, expertise, and unwavering commitment. Her ability to comfort patients and their families in times of crisis has been a hallmark of her career. Eileen has left an indelible mark on both her colleagues and the countless patients whose lives she touched.



If your colleague is retiring – let us know and we will include their photo in Mercy Times. Please ensure you have their permission before submission.

Wellbeing

Enhancing staff wellbeing improves the quality of patient experience!

The second MUH Employee Wellbeing Week of 2024 was held from November 11th to 15th. All of the usual treats were back, and staff enjoyed a variety of lovely snacks and produce provided by our Catering Department. Dinky Donuts made a welcome return and for staff wanting to improve their Cycling skills – there was lots of information on routes, levels etc. available all week. Time out for staff included mini facials and massages.

A dedicated Information Morning included talks and stands focused on personal safety. Foot Solutions, Cork City Fire Brigade, An Garda Siochana and the Road Safety Authority were on hand to share valuable tips and information. The MUH Occupational Health Department, once again facilitated vision screening and blood pressure readings throughout the week.

MUH EMPLOYEE Wellbeing #The Mercy Way

A test of knowledge rounded off Wellbeing Week with a table quiz organized by The Mercy Social Club. It was a tight race to the finish line but congratulations to everyone who won and even the team that came last won a prize!!

The overall team winners of the Quiz were:
1st Prize - No Mercy
2nd Prize - Lung Wild and Free
3rd Prize - Back to the lab again

Some fantastic spot prizes were raffled off which were kindly sponsored by Bank of Ireland, Comedy Club City Limits and Boardwalk Café Washington Street.





Staff Wellbeing | Protect yourself against Breast Cancer

On Friday, September 20th, Outreach Coordinator with Breast Cancer Ireland, Juliet O'Connell presented to staff on breast health awareness including self-examination (with the assistance of a medical mannequin) and provided advice on the 8 signs of symptoms of breast cancer to be aware of.

Both women and men, of all ages were invited to attend as early detection can help beat the disease before it's too late.

Thanks to CNM2 Aoife Foyle and Enda Voronins (Occupational Health) for organising this session.



This is Mercy!

Living our Values!

A sincere and heartfelt thanks to Mercy Staff across the hospital who organise fundraisers, coffee mornings, clothes collections etc., throughout the year, to make the lives of our patients and the wider community that we serve a little bit easier. Most recently ….

The MUH Physio Department gathered "previously loved" boxes of clothes for both male and female patients of the hospital and provided them to the Patient Liaison Service for distribution.



Staff of the MUH Pathology Dept, collected €630 for Enable Ireland at a coffee morning hosted in their tea-room Christmas week.



The Pharmacy Team ensured that the Mercy Values were integral to their "Deck the Doors" competition entry this year and included a collection for Penny Dinners as part of their entry.





Status Red - #TeamSpirit

Storm Éowyn roared across Ireland in the early hours of January 24th meriting a Status Red Alert. A Status Red Alert is an exceptional event, and it is safe to say that MUH gave an exceptional response to ensure that our patients and their loved ones, as well as our staff, were cared for and kept safe.

188 staff stayed overnight to ensure continuous patient care, including:

- Clinical Staff who went above and beyond in ensuring the prioritisation of patient care.
- Support Services who created a place of warmth for staff with a ready supply of food and drinks and a secure environment.
- The Catering department who ensured there was no break in service of meal provision for patients and who also provided a free cooked breakfast for staff on the following morning.
- Technical Services and ICT who safeguarded the building and its functions, and
- Members of the MUH Executive Management team who were on site to co-ordinate, advise and support staff throughout.

MUH CEO, Margaret McKiernan acknowledged all staff who stayed on site, made critical preparations in advance and heeded the warnings, *"I am very grateful to all staff for their extraordinary efforts in ensuring emergency and essential care was maintained during the Red Alert and beyond. This is in the context of your earlier response to the previous snow/ice weather event at the start of January. The MUH Core Value of Team Spirit translates into action through partnership, co-operation, support and working together. This Value was embodied by all of you as your response made Mercy real in meeting the needs of our patients and in supporting each other."*



Healthy Turkey Burger with Smoked Paprika Mayo

Gary Costello, MUH Head Chef



INGREDIENTS: Burger

- 500grms Turkey Mince
- 1 chopped onion pureed
- 2 tsps. of oregano
- 50grms porridge oats
- 1 courgette finely diced
- 1 tsps. garlic
- I egg
- 1tspn of smoked paprika

METHOD

1. Add all ingredients into large bowl and mix well
2. Mould into 125gr Burgers
3. Sear on pan on either side and finish in oven at 170 degrees for 14 mins

INGREDIENTS: Garnish

- 4 wholemeal baps toasted
- 1 tsp red onion relish
- 1 Sliced Red onion
- 25 grms rocket
- 1 beef tomato sliced
- 4 tablespoons of light mayonnaise
- 1tsp of smoked paprika
- Squeeze of orange juice

METHOD

1. Mix mayonnaise, orange juice and paprika together.
2. Toast bun -then spread a little mayonnaise on one side and onion relish on other
3. Then add tomato and rocket and red onion
4. Place cooked turkey burger on tomato side.
5. Serve with Baked Sweet Potato Wedges.

Editorial Team

Mercy Times has a wide audience that is continuing to grow across the health, corporate and political sectors and it is a wonderful opportunity to showcase all that is good and positive about MUH.

Join the Team ... if you have an article, photo, snippet, event ... let us know .... We are here for you!

Meet your Mercy Times Editorial Team for this Edition



Tara Carrig:
Tara supports HR Recruitment – ext 5652



Cleo Davies:
Cleo is the Personal Assistant to the Operations Director – ext 5671



Sinead Goggin:
Sinead is the Senior Executive Assistant to the CEO – ext 5344



Siobhán Kenny (Editor):
Siobhán is the Mission & Values Lead for MUH – ext 5653



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Our contributors for this edition: Thank you!
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