MERCY UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL, CORK LIMITED

Issue No.45 July 2025

Mercy times

Transforming Healthcare Delivery MUH Strategy 2025-2030

On May 23, 2025, Mercy University Hospital (MUH) launched its strategic plan for 2025-2030, *"Maintaining and Improving the Health and Wellbeing of those we Serve"*, outlining a comprehensive vision for the future of healthcare delivery within the hospital and the community it serves.

The strategy was officially launched by Dr Colm Henry, Chief Clinical Officer of the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the hospital was delighted to welcome Deputy Lord Mayor, Cllr Honore Kamegni and Minister of State Jerry Buttimer, TD, to mark the occasion.



Members of the MUH Executive Management Board with Dr Colm Henry – L-R Margaret Lynch (Operations), Dr Henry, Lorraine O'Sullivan (Development), Dr Darren McLoughlin (Clinical Director Medicine and Laboratory), Ria Greaves (HR), Prof David Kerins (Executive Clinical Director), Margaret McKiernan (CEO), Brendan Doyle (Finance) and Maria Connolly (Quality & Risk)

Values Driven

Rooted in the hospital's core values of Compassion, Excellence, Justice, Respect, and Team Spirit, the plan details MUH's commitment to enhancing patient care, modernising facilities, reinforcing community engagement, and embracing digital transformation. Key initiatives will be implemented across four strategic areas: People, Continuous Operational Improvement, Sustainability, and Technology & Partnership.

"Our new strategic plan reflects Mercy University Hospital's unwavering commitment to putting patients first and striving for excellence in everything we do," said Margaret McKiernan, Chief Executive Officer of Mercy University Hospital. "We have carefully considered our role in healthcare provision to the city and wider region, collaborating with our regional partners to continue to advocate for our patients through the delivery of exceptional evidence-based patient care, and also supporting the development of the next generation of healthcare professionals in Ireland."

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There is more inside…

- ***Volunteering in Uganda***
- ***7th Clinical Audit and Quality Improvement Day***
- ***MUH Leading in Wellbeing | Keep Well Mark***
- ***Acknowledgements and Congratulations!***



L-R: Ann-Marie O'Sullivan (MUH Board of Directors), Deputy Lord Mayor, Cllr Honore Kamegni and CEO Margaret McKiernan



Minister of State Jerry Buttimer

Six Pillars – Four Big Moves

The 2025-2030 strategy is grounded in six strategic pillars: Mission, Quality, Stewardship, Digital, Sustainability, and Research. These pillars have enabled the identification of four "Big Moves" that will drive progress over the next five years:

- **People:** Developing a partnership approach to foster team spirit and enhance job satisfaction for staff, recognising them as the hospital's most important asset.
- **Continuous Operational Improvement:** Maintaining high standards of quality, excellence, and performance in all aspects of the organisation's services.
- **Sustainability:** Assuming ecological responsibility through practices that promote respect and care for the environment, working towards the 2050 Net Zero targets.
- **Technology & Partnership:** Implementing necessary improvement plans based on best practice, innovative technology, knowledge, and skill, including a "Hospital without Walls" approach.

The plan also addresses key capital developments, including a new extension comprising 72 beds, an increase in the number of ICU/HDU beds. MUH is also committed to delivering better digital services, including the introduction of Electronic Prescribing and the adoption of the Electronic Healthcare Record, in line with national policy.

Mercy University Hospital serves a diverse and growing population and is committed to providing a sustainable, socially relevant service in line with national and international evidence-based practice. The hospital's mission is to provide excellent patient services to maintain and improve the health and wellbeing of those they serve, especially those who are most vulnerable and marginalised.





Dr Colm Henry, Chief Clinical Officer (HSE) and CEO Margaret McKiernan

CCU Study Day Awareness of the Need

Congratulations to the MUH Nurse Practice Development Unit on the successful roll out of the first Cardiac Specific Study Day for all nursing staff in the hospital's Critical Care Unit (CCU).

CNM2, Maeve Stakelum, together with her Nurse Practice Development Unit (NPDU) colleagues, identified key areas that needed refreshing and enhancing. Once these areas were identified, Maeve was able to design the programme and draw on the wealth of expertise across the hospital to deliver the education sessions which was run over two days.

The itinerary for the day included:

Topic	Speaker
Cardiac Anatomy & Physiology	Maeve Stakelum CNM2 NPDU
Cardiac Assessment	Maeve Stakelum CNM2 NPDU
INEWS/ ISBAR refresher	Emma Crowley Clinical Facilitator
Sepsis Overview	Teresa Marshall ICU Clinical Facilitator
ABG Analysis	Maeve Stakelum CNM2 NPDU
Rhythm Workshop	Teresa Hynes Resuscitation Officer
DKA	Linda McCarthy CNS Diabetes, Ellen Harris CNM2 Diabetes, Jo Leahy CNM 1 CCU
Medication (vasopressors)	Andrzej Borkowski CNM2 ICU, Eoin Cahill CNM3 ICU/CCU
Common Cardiac Disorders	Professor Carl Vaughan, Dr. Roghinio Noray, Dr. Rob Evans, Dr. Cian Lenihan
Cardiac Diagnostics	Mary Montgomery





Each speaker delivered their talks eloquently, sharing previous experiences and providing examples and interesting scenarios. The session ended with a simulation conducted by Eoin Cahill, Katie Mulcahy and Maeve Stakelum. The day proved a huge success with great engagement, interaction and learnings and agreement on further such education and study days for the future!

Thanks to Barbara O' Donnell (ADON), Martina Hughes (ADON Nurse Practice Development Unit) and the NPDU Administration Team for supporting the project.

Celebrating Excellence in Service Improvement

7th Clinical Audit and Quality Improvement Day

Mercy University Hospital proudly hosted its 7th Clinical Audit & Quality Improvement Day on 26th June 2025, a flagship event that recognises the ongoing commitment of our teams in enhancing the quality and safety of patient care across the hospital.

This year's event showcased the depth of improvement initiatives under way within our organisation, with an impressive 67 projects submitted. These ranged across key themes including Clinical Audit, Patient-Centred Care, Service Improvement, and the Effective Use of Resources—each one a testament to the dedication, innovation, and collaborative spirit of our staff.

Updates from Winners 2024

Two previous winners from the 2024 Clinical Audit Day, were invited to share valuable updates on the continued progress of their award-winning projects—demonstrating the sustained impact of quality improvement work beyond the event itself.

- **Lucy Quinlivan & Prof. Helen Richards** (Dept. of Gastroenterology & Dept of Clinical Health Psychology respectively) presented on Cognitive-behavioural therapy in the management of supragastric belching – preliminary results of a GI physiologist delivered intervention
- **Emma Murphy** (CNM3, Emergency Department) presented on Improving Ambulance Turnaround Times

Keynote Address

A highlight of the day was the keynote address delivered by **Dr. Colm Henry**, Chief Clinical Officer of the Health Service Executive and former Clinical Director at Mercy University Hospital. His insights, grounded in both national and local healthcare leadership, enriched the day and inspired ongoing excellence in clinical practice.

Acknowledgements

Congratulations to the event organisers on another successful day:

- Prof. David Kerins, Executive Clinical Director
- Maria Connolly, Director of Quality, Risk and Patient Safety
- Maria O'Keeffe, PA to the Executive Clinical Director
- Cassie Willis, Complaints Officer
- Ann McCarthy, Quality Co-ordinator
- Rebecca Gardiner, PA to the Quality and Risk Management Dept

Sincere gratitude to the Judging Panel for their commitment of time and expertise in reviewing all 67 abstracts and posters in advance of the event and for the challenging task of selecting winners from such an outstanding body of work.



Booklet of Projects



L-R: Dr D McLoughlin, Prof D Kerins, Dr Colm Henry, Mr Paul Sweeney and Dr Kieran O'Connor



Mr Paul Sweeney, Clinical Director, Peri-operative and Radiology presenting the Colleagues Recognition Award to Sophie Crosbie



Organisers L-R Rebecca Gardiner, Cassie Willis, Ann McCarthy, Prof Kerins, Maria O'Keeffe and Maria Connolly



67 Project Posters on Display

The 2025 Clinical Audit & Quality Improvement Day award recipients were:

Overall Winner| Sr. Laurentia Perpetual Award for the Overall Achievement of Excellence	
Project: Establishing a Point of Care Ultrasound (PoCUS) Clinic for Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD): A Quality Improvement Initiative	**Team:** Caitriona O Sullivan, Kathleen Sugrue, Sarah Gleeson, Dr Donal Sheehan, Professor Martin Buckley, Dr Jane McCarthy, Dr Carthage Moran, Dr Ciaran McDonald IBD Centre
Clinical Audit Category	
Project: Swift Action Saves lives: Adhering to Sepsis 6 Guidelines in MUH Emergency Department	**Team:** Dr Kholofelo Selatlha, Dr Abhichek Sharma, Dr Elhaytham Hassan, Dr Mohamed Alsiddig, Dr Arsal Siddique, Dr Ruhma Hussain, Ms Catriona Downey, Vyataus Senutis, Ms Anne Healy, Ms Sinead Horgan, Dr Darren McLoughlin (Supervisor). Emergency Department
Improving Patient Experience Category	
Project: Development and implementation of 'I See You' white boards to the ICU in MUH as a multi-disciplinary, person-centred intervention to support the prevention and management of delirium.	**Team:** Teresa Marshall ICU Clinical Facilitator, Aoife Buckley ICU CNM2, Keith O'Sullivan, Senior Physiotherapist in Critical Care, Ruth Swanton Senior Occupational Therapist in Critical Care, Maeve Dennehy Chief 2 Pharmacist, Rebecca Lynch Senior Pharmacist, Finola Ferris Senior Speech and Language Therapist in Critical Care, Andrzej Borkowski ICU CNM2, Tracey Dineen, Patient Liaison Officer. ICU
Improvements in Effective Care & Support Category	
Project: A service development project using the DMAIC QI Model to establish St Brendan's Unit, a new Regional Specialist Memory Clinic, at Mercy University Hospital.	**Team:** M O'Donovan (OT), G Malaki (CNS Dementia), P Crowley (SpR), R Sheehan (CNM2), S Maher (ANP Dementia), J Appadoo (SLT), A O'Neill (MSW), L Flynn (Dietitian), R O'Caoimh (Cons Geriatrician), St. Brendan's Unit MDT
Improved Use of Resources	
Project: Optimization of the Maximum Surgical Blood Ordering Schedule (MSBOS) in Oesophagogastric Resection Surgeries: A Retrospective Study.	**Team:** Jowhara Al-Qahtani, David O'Keeffe, Mr Thomas Murphy Upper GI Surgery Department & Blood Bank Department
Colleagues Recognition Award	
Project: The assessment and analysis of common falls risk factors on St Mary's ward, in comparison with the National TILDA Study.	**Team:** Sophie Crosbie, Deirdre Twomey, Ruth Madigan Physiotherapy Department

Enhancing Healthcare Training

Opening of Seminar, Skills and Simulation Classroom at MUH



L-R Front Row: Dr. Rónán O'Caoimh, Theresa Marshall, Ann Cummins, Rachel Stevenson
L-R Back Row: Siobhán Buckley, Jo Keane, Rachel Long, Elizabeth Myers

On May 6th, Mercy University Hospital (MUH), opened a state-of-the-art Seminar, Skills and Simulation Classroom within its Centre of Nurse Education. Designed to deliver immersive, realistic training, the new facility aims to transform how healthcare professionals develop clinical and teamwork skills by simulating real-life scenarios in a safe environment. The Seminar, Skills and Simulation Classroom was developed in the Mercy University Hospital Centre of Nurse Education (CNE) complex, led by its Director, Ann Cummins and Consultant Geriatrician and Postgraduate Education Lead Dr Rónán O'Caoimh.

Mercy First!

Mercy University Hospital, Cork is the only hospital in the HSE Southwest Health Region with a simulation lab facility, and is ideally situated, close to University College Cork and other hospitals in the region. Dr O'Caoimh told Mercy Times that, *"The Seminar, Skills and Simulation Classroom comprises of a state-of-the-art simulation suite which can support manikin-based, virtual reality and live role-play simulations, and can double up as a seminar space and surgical and clinical skills classroom".*

Commitment

Director of the Centre of Nurse Education, Ann Cummins, further explains *"this is a significant achievement for the Centre of Nurse Education and Mercy University Hospital, Cork; and represents our ongoing commitment to excellence in patient care, interdisciplinary healthcare education and innovation. There are numerous advantages to simulation-based education, which has become an integral component of education, including allowing for experiential learning and practice, and has been proven to enhance critical thinking skills, increase patient safety and promote interprofessional teamwork in a culture of safety and quality improvement in healthcare organisations. With a Lecture Theatre, Tutorial Room, Classrooms and a Library available on site for supportive educational requirements, the Centre of Nurse Education was an ideal choice for the new initiative."*

MUH Foundation Support

The project was funded through the HSE's National Doctors Training and Planning via the NCHD Good Standards 2024 Project Funding initiative and the Mercy Hospital Foundation. Attending the official opening of the Seminar, Skills and Simulation Classroom, CEO of the Mercy University Hospital Foundation, Rachel Stevenson said *"We are very proud to have supported the development of the new Seminar, Skills and Simulation Classroom at the Centre of Nurse Education, Mercy University Hospital. At the Mercy Hospital Foundation, we are committed to investing in initiatives that directly enhance patient care and clinical excellence. Supporting the new Simulation Classroom means helping our doctors, nurses, and healthcare teams learn, grow, and ultimately provide even better care for patients."*

Congratulations

Mr Paul Sweeney

Congratulations Paul Sweeney, Consultant Urologist, who is this year's winner of the **British Association of Urological Surgeons (Trainee Section) Silver Cystoscope Award**. Paul was nominated by 15 trainees in the Republic of Ireland with some extracts of the nomination below:

"Mr Paul Sweeney is universally acknowledged by those who have trained in Ireland as a rare gem of a trainer and mentor. The citations all express the sentiment that Mr Sweeney is an excellent surgeon who has made a significant and lasting impact on each generation of trainees he has worked with. He is an outstanding trainer with unmatched experience and academic knowledge. He has played a pivotal role in shaping the careers of countless surgeons. His calm and reassuring manner in theatre, has allowed trainees to vastly expand their skills and confidence under his tutelage.

"His mentorship extends beyond surgical technique; he instils in his trainees a profound sense of responsibility, ethics, and professionalism. Under his guidance, trainees have flourished into accomplished surgeons themselves, a true testament to his commitment to the development of future surgical leaders."



Advanced Nurse Practitioner Sarah Gleeson

Congratulations Sarah Gleeson, winner of the 2025 **Dr Falk Ireland Nurse Recognition Award** for Improvement in Patient Care. Sarah received the Award for her initiative 'The Implementation of a Nurse Led Vaccination Clinic for Patients Living with IBD'. The winning initiative was developed by Ms Gleeson to ensure that all MUH IBD patients at high risk of developing Herpes Zoster (shingles) should have equitable access to the appropriate vaccine.

Sarah's Line Manager, Advanced Nurse Practitioner IBD, Kathleen Sugrue notes: *'Sarah's project has had a very positive and beneficial impact on patient care at Mercy University Hospital. Despite this vaccine not being part of the national vaccine policy Sarah showed initiative and leadership in successfully advocating for its availability and implementation for patients living with IBD, showing her commitment to best practice and ECCO guidelines.'*

Sarah has also won an INMO Award at the recent INMO Conference in Wexford.



Leaders in Management Programme

Congratulations to Eithne Barden, Brendan Brosnan, Karen Donovan and Siobhán Kenny who recently completed the ten month **South West Region Leaders in Management Programme.** The programme comprised seven modules culminating in a Project Presentation by each participant. The following were the projects presented by the MUH participants:

Enhancing Communication between the Pathology Department and the End User
Eithne Barden, Laboratory Manager

Electronic Patient Meal Ordering
Brendan Brosnan, Catering Manager

Enhanced Supervision Care| Holistic, Compassionate, Person and Family Centred – Building the Therapeutic Relationship
Karen Donovan, Assistant Director of Nursing

Redesign of Hospital Website| Guided by the Core Mercy Values
Siobhán Kenny, Mission & Values Lead



Ms Sophie Crosby

Congratulations Sophie Crosbie, Staff Grade Physiotherapist, who recently received an award from the Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists for **highest results in Clinical Assessment** during her final year as a physiotherapy student in University of Limerick.



Dr Marie Kelly

Congratulations Dr Marie Kelly, Senior Musculoskeletal Physiotherapist. Marie has become the first PhD student to graduate from the **MSc in Physiotherapy Program** at University College Cork.



Mercy Memory – 10 Years Ago!

Many memories have been captured and recorded across the pages of Mercy Times. We are going to recount some of those memories in future issues and are kickstarting with the **July 2015** edition of Mercy Times which carried a story about a fun Staff Day Out….

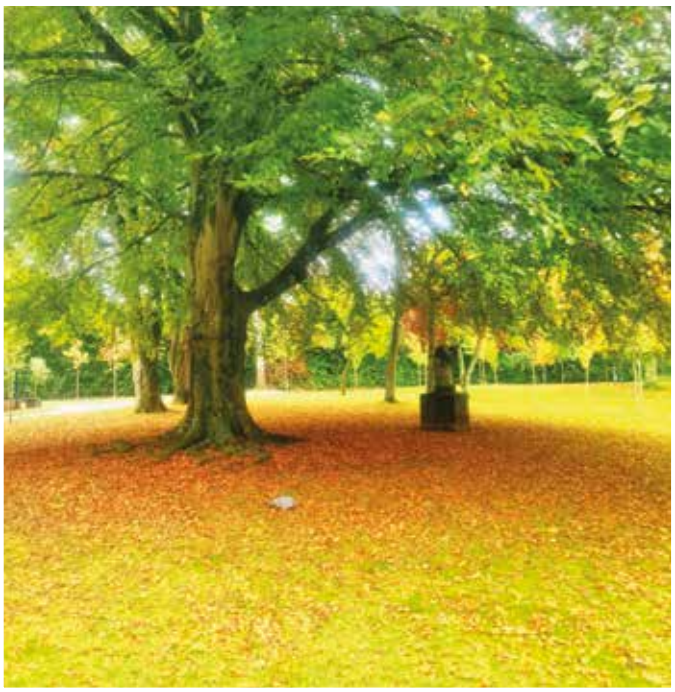
*Staff from Mercy University Hospital took part in the first ever **MUH Foot Golf** event on Saturday, June 27th.*

A total of 19 participants, from a variety of Departments, tested their skills with John Chambers, Healthcare Assistant, St. Brigid's Ward emerging as the triumphant and deserving winner.

A great day was had by all and congratulations John!



Meeting Mercy



"May you meet mercy each day; in the light of your own heart, at the hands of your loved ones, in the eyes of the stranger and the needy."

(Mary Wickham, RSM)

HSE

Making Every Contact Count

Blended Learning Programme for Chronic Disease Prevention

Including 6 x 30 mins online modules on www.hseland.ie
and a 3.5hrs in person brief intervention skills workshop
For information contact Cork/Kerry MECC Lead Maire O' Leary mairem.oleary@hse.ie

MAKING EVERY CONTACT COUNT

Online Modules (3hrs) on www.hseland.ie

- Introduction to Behaviour Change
- Tobacco Free
- Alcohol and Drug Use
- Get Ireland Active
- Healthy Food for Life
- Skills into Practice

Please note: Online modules need to be complete in advance of attending the workshop.

Enhancing Your Brief Intervention Skills Workshop (3.5hrs)

Mercy University Hospital
Centre of Nursing Education

Date: 5th November
Time: 9.30am - 1.00pm

How to Book

- Log onto www.hseland.ie
- Paste **MECC Cork Kerry** into the search bar.
- Scroll down through the list of workshops to find your workshop.

CPD Points available from NMBI, IACP and CORU

Making Every Contact Count
"One Conversation Can Change a Life"
www.makingeverycontactcount.ie

FSS an Iardheiscirt
HSE South West

Thank You!

In late Spring, Mercy University Hospital took time to acknowledge all staff for their exceptional dedication of ensuring continuous patient care throughout the adverse weather conditions that prevailed in the first months of 2025. It was also an opportunity for the Mercy to acknowledge and appreciate the invaluable support and assistance provided by the hospital's interagency partners throughout these events.

Staff were delighted to be joined, for the traditional Mercy "Good Cup of Tea" by, amongst others, REO South West Region, Dr Andy Phillips, Emergency Management Officer, HSE South West Cian O'Brien, Lieutenant Colonel Kevin Higgins and Lieutenant Colonel Ian Harrington of the Irish Defence Forces together with Members of 1 Field Engineer Company and Members of Military Policy Company and Superintendent John Deasy of An Garda Siochána.









Thank You Peter O'Riordan

CEO Margaret McKiernan, on behalf of all staff of MUH, made a presentation to Sergeant Peter O'Riordan for his dedicated commitment and service to MUH during his tenure as Community Garda, while attached to the Bridewell Garda Station. .



Daisy Award Winner Thank you Eve Fisher

Congratulations to Daisy Award Winner – **Eve Fisher**. MUH is very proud to partner with DAISY and celebrate and acknowledge our extraordinary nurses here at Mercy University Hospital. Eve is a Registered General Nurse in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and is the second recipient of this Award at Mercy University Hospital.

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.

Eve was nominated by a patient's family member who noted in their heartfelt nomination that Eve *"consistently demonstrated unwavering compassion, professionalism, and dedication and provided informative and empathetic support – answering questions or offering a comforting presence. Eve's kindness, understanding and dedication to patient care exemplified the highest standards of nursing. Her expertise and genuine care made a significant impact on our loved one's wellbeing".*

Mercy University Hospital Leading in Wellbeing



Mercy University Hospital (MUH) has been accredited in workplace wellbeing through the IBEC Keep Well Mark Accreditation process.



The Keep Well Accreditation Committee

The hospital received the good news in November 2024 and received the formal Keep Well Mark Outcome Report and Glass Trophy in early 2025. The Keep Well Mark is an evidence-based workplace wellbeing accreditation awarded to companies who have enrolled in the Keep Well Programme and have successfully met the standards of the framework. The 8 standards are: Leadership, Mental Health, Occupational Safety and Health, Inclusion and Belonging, Nutrition and Physical Activity, Intoxicants, Talent Support and Development and Attendance Management.

Process

MUH commenced the accreditation process by establishing a multi-disciplinary committee, under the leadership of Medical Manpower Manager, Fiona Lynch. An initial internal self-assessment was followed by a meeting with an IBEC representative to outline the accreditation process regarding the assembly of an evidence portfolio and to provide details of the on-site evaluation from independent assessors.

Evidence Portfolio

The first part of the accreditation process was the assembly of the Evidence Portfolio. A Teams Channel was set up by HR to enable collaborative sharing between the multi-disciplinary committee. The evidence portfolio was designed with each standard assigned a folder and then with a further sub-division across the three accreditation levels – Commitment, Achievement and Excellence). Each level had a further set of sub-standards to be met (114 in total). Each of these sub-standards were designated subfolders and the committee members were assigned different standards to compile evidence for these.

Examples of the evidence assembled included polices, reports, training schedules, photos etc. that all related to meeting the criteria for each sub-standard. The final portfolio was an immense success and comprised over 700 pieces of evidence.

On Site Assessment

On November 29th, an independent assessor visited MUH further to the submission of the Evidence Portfolio. There was an initial meeting with the multi-disciplinary committee where a brief presentation was given on the history, mission and values of MUH and how employee wellbeing was embedded within the hospital's future strategic aims.

The assessor subsequently met with the CEO and various employee and line manager forums to assess their views on the implementation of MUH Wellbeing policies, events etc. A site tour rounded off this stage of the assessment.

To close out the day, the assessor met with senior HR representatives, who had led out on the process, and confirmed that MUH had successfully achieved the IBEC Keep Well Mark.

Benefits of IBEC Keep Well Mark Accreditation

The benefits of attaining this Award are multiple:

- Accreditation is in line with "Best in Class" national policies
- Improvement in staff productivity and engagement
- Help with staff retention and attracting new talent
- Increase staff morale and empower a resilient workforce
- Reduce absenteeism
- Stronger employer brand and reputation

Next Steps

The Keep Well Mark Trophy was presented to staff at a meeting of the Senior Leaders in April 2025 and since April 2025, the Keep Well Logo is published on all MUH recruitment advertisements. In May, MUH was also selected for the fifth annual Top 100 Companies Leading in Wellbeing (in association with Business and Finance).
The Award is valid for 2 years, pending a mid-year review in November 2025, and MUH continue to review recommendations from the assessor with identified action plans drafted by the senior HR Business Partners and the Keep Well Accreditation Committee.

Wellbeing Week 2025

The first MUH Employee Wellbeing Week of 2025 took place from May 26th to May 30th. Once again, the Wellbeing Committee ensured a fun filled week with all the usual treats, information sessions, time out moments and testing the brain power of the hospital!

Information Stands

There was lots of information available for staff with the dedicated Staff Information Morning making a return. This time, there was representation from Nrg Health & Fitness, River Lee Hotel, Cork City Fire Brigade, Bank of Ireland and talks on Autism in Adults, ADHD and Pensions.

Imaging Consulting

This year, the Wellbeing Committee were delighted to welcome Breeda O Connell of BOC Image Consulting, Breeda regularly shares style tips, client transformations and updates on Instagram @boc_imageconsulting. MUH staff got the opportunity for a session with Breeda and got great value from the experience - figuring out which colours make them shine (and which ones to leave on the hanger!). With such high demand for consultations, it's clear everyone's ready to embrace their new style and look fabulous! For people who are interested, they can view a full list on Breeda's website: ***www.bocimageconsulting.ie***.

Our Wellness

Wellbeing Week's "Wellness Wednesday" included a talk from Lucy Kenefick, proud founder of NuMe Collective. Lucy is a qualified and experienced nutrition and movement coach with over 15 years in the fitness industry. Her passion lies in helping women reclaim control over their health, energy, and confidence. Through education, empathy, and expert guidance, she also supports women through the physical, mental, and emotional challenges of perimenopause and beyond.

Time Out

Once again, each morning of Wellbeing Week started with free treats, organised by the MUH Catering Department, available to all staff (with provision made for night duty staff also) while The Sweet Cart and Freddie's Ice Cream were welcomed by everyone during the week. Brow & Beauty provided free facials and pedicures, and Lestari Therapies returned with their Chair Massages. An introduction to the art of Meditation and Sound Bath formed part of "Wellness Wednesday" and was well attended and received by staff.

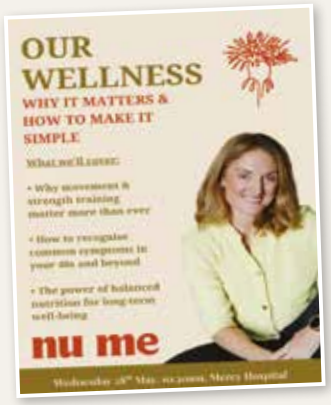
Table Quiz

The Social Club, in partnership with the Wellbeing Committee organised the final event of the week. Teams competed fiercely, with the contest coming down to the wire—at one point with a team that was in 9th place eventually securing victory!

It was a night filled with intense point-robbing, hilarious banter, and plenty of fun as teams tried to outsmart each other. As always, only one team could claim the top spot, and congratulations to **The Clot Thickens** for taking first place! They were followed closely by team **The Legal Drug Deals** who took second prize.

And of course, a big round of applause to the team that finished last, **We Came, We Saw, We Overcompensated**, but still walked away with a fantastic prize.

Congratulations to all the winners of the fantastic raffle prizes! There was a €100 voucher for Pat McDonald's Paint, two €60 vouchers for Liberty Grill, and two €50 vouchers for Old Mill and many more spot prizes! Huge thanks to each Company for their generosity and support.













Aoife Walsh – A Tribute "One of a Kind"

It was with great sadness and shock that the staff of Mercy University Hospital, learned of the death of our colleague and friend, Aoife Walsh, on January 21st.

Aoife joined Mercy University Hospital in October 2015 as a Health Care Assistant. Employed as a locum initially, Aoife worked across all clinical areas, eventually moving to St. Brigid's Ward, transferring to St. Joseph's (where she worked throughout COVID19) and finally to St. Camillus' Ward. However, Aoife's bubbly personality meant that so many, across every discipline in the hospital, were fortunate to have met her and known her.

In remembering Aoife, one trait stands out most and this was her ability to bring joy to a room full of people replete with her gorgeous smile and contagious laugh. Her positivity and beautiful upbeat nature brightened everyone's day.

Professionally and personally, Aoife embodied the Mercy Values. The kind compassionate care she delivered to her patients was done diligently and competently but always with a warm smile and good humour. Aoife had a special gift of soothing the grief and pain of our patients on their palliative journey, while never forgetting their families. She had an innate empathy and ability to make people feel better when they were at their most vulnerable and many family members of patients were comforted in knowing that when Aoife was on duty you knew your loved ones were in safe and kind hands.

Quick witted, bubbly and happy, there was never a dull moment in Aoife's company. She brought light and warmth to not just the patients of Mercy University Hospital but to her many colleagues, who were also dear friends. She was a genuine and loyal friend who was always there for others and lifted everyone's spirits.

Aoife leaves an enduring legacy - warm, caring, hardworking, bringing a positive energy to "the Mercy" each day which radiated through her smile and laughter, generous with her time and much loved. Her positivity was infectious, her work ethic inspiring.

Mercy University Hospital extend heartfelt sympathies to Aoife's beloved family – her parents Donny, and Julie and her sister and brother Kim and Michael and her many friends. We also hold in thoughts and prayer her many colleagues and friends, here at MUH, who miss her greatly and will never forget her.

Although Aoife's time with us was brief, all who crossed paths with her were blessed and privileged to know her. Rest in peace lovely Aoife.

MPN Voice – Patient Forum 2025

On the 16th of May, patients living with Myeloproliferative Neoplasms ("MPNs") gathered in the River Lee Hotel in Cork for the annual MPN Voice Patient Forum. MPNs are a group of rare blood cancers comprising of Essential Thrombocythemia, Polycythaemia Vera and Myelofibrosis.

MPN Voice is a volunteer founded and operated patient advocacy group. Their goal is to provide a source of professionally backed information, build and facilitate an MPN community and advocate for patients affected by this rare group of blood cancers. On hand to present on the day were members of Mercy University Hospital's Haematology team lead by Dr Clodagh Keohane. Clinical Nurse Specialists Avril Gleeson and Shóna Spillane provided an informative session on Symptom Management in MPNs, and Haematology Pharmacist Maeve Dennehy presented on Medication Management in MPNs. Dr Keohane was joined by Consultant Haematologist colleagues Dr Claire Andrews SVUH, Dr Chris Armstrong SJH and Dr Patrick Harrington, Guy's & St Thomas' Hospital, London to present on individual MPNs.

The forum also heard from patients of the Mercy who are living with MPNs and highlighted the excellent care and service they have experienced as patients of MUH. The forum was a resounding success with over 80 attendees in person with many others linking in from the UK, New Zealand, Italy, USA, Canada, Holland, United Arab Emirates and France.



(Pictured L-R) Dr Clodagh Keohane Cons. Haematologist, Maeve Dennehy Haematology Pharmacist, Shóna Spillane and Avril Gleeson Haematology CNSs, Dr Hannah Sammon Haematology SHO and Dr Katie Liston Haematology SPR.

Bibliotherapy - Pastoral Care Library

Introducing

With support from the Mercy Hospital Foundation, the Chaplaincy and Library Departments of Mercy University Hospital have come together to create a new resource for the hospital community – a **Pastoral Care Library Collection**.

The collection is designed to be easily accessible. Located at the entrance to the chapel, it operates on a self-service basis, allowing users to borrow and return books whenever they might need them. All of us can benefit from bibliotherapy, therefore, the collection can be used by staff, patients and visitors alike.

You simply need to fill out the provided loans/returns form when borrowing a book and it is yours for up to four weeks.

What is bibliotherapy?

Bibliotherapy involves the use of books for therapeutic purposes. It adopts a problem-solving approach to getting through tough times and can help you learn more about what you are going through. The books selected for the pastoral care library collection were carefully chosen with this purpose in mind.

What books were chosen?

The collection includes practical guides to mindfulness, prayer, and self-acceptance; reflections on suffering, grief, and resilience; insights from various faiths and secular traditions; and wisdom on finding meaning, rest, and renewal in everyday life. The collection also features sacred texts, personal memoirs, and meditative writings that encourage readers to embrace life's challenges with compassion, faith, and a sense of purpose.

What inspired this project?

Psycho-oncologist Dr Tara Houlihan, former MUH Librarian Breeda Hurley and all those in the Mercy Hospital Foundation who worked to develop the Mercy Cancer Care Centre Library deserve huge credit for paving the way for bibliotherapy in our hospital community. Anne Kelly, MUH Chaplain explains that *"we can get a perspective on our own lives when reading about someone else's experience"*. The unique opportunity to achieve this provided by books, led to a growing desire for a pastoral care library collection that could recreate the success of the Mercy Cancer Care Centre Library.



Anne Kelly (Chaplaincy) and Paul Breen (MUH Library) introducing the new service

How was the goal achieved?

Recognising the desire for a pastoral care library collection, UCC Librarian Breeda Hurley was instrumental in getting the idea off the ground. She secured the necessary funding from the Mercy Hospital Foundation and worked with UCC Library Assistant Alex Browne to curate a thoughtful and diverse selection of titles, ensuring the resources would meaningfully address a broad spectrum of pastoral care needs.

MUH Librarian Paul Breen then worked with Simon Wood in Procurement to order the books. Upon their arrival, Paul catalogued the collection in MUH Library's management system and established a loan and returns process. Finally, Paul and Anne Kelly put the finishing touches on the display at the entrance to the chapel, where the collection is in use already!

Acknowledgements

Paul and Anne will manage this system going forward and are confident that the pastoral care library will help to support the emotional and spiritual dimensions of health, complementing the medical care patients receive – with the additional benefit of supporting the wellbeing of staff and visitors, whenever they might need to take some time to reflect.

Thanks to Breeda Walsh (UCC Library), Alex Browne (UCC Library), Paul Breen (MUH Librarian), Anne Kelly (MUH Chaplain), and Simon Wood (MUH Supplies Officer) for working to make this project happen. Finally, special thanks are due to the Mercy Hospital Foundation, who provided funding for all items in the pastoral care library collection. Without this support, none of this would have been possible.

Recognition and Awareness

Each year, there are key dates in the national and international healthcare diary dedicated to generating awareness for important health topics and recognising the different professions that comprise healthcare. Such days are centred around recognising staff contribution and innovation and are integral to nurturing staff engagement. Mercy University Hospital (MUH) recently celebrated 3 events that recognised staff and raised awareness of their dedicated disciplines.

International Nurse's Day

International Nurses Day, 2025, was celebrated by MUH on May 12th under the banner - *"Our Nurses. Our Future. Caring for Nurses strengthens economies"*. MUH took the opportunity to honour and acknowledge the many valuable contributions Nurses make to our society – especially caring for us and our loved ones at the most challenging and often vulnerable times of our lives. A poster exhibition showcased the tremendous work and initiatives underway across the Department of Nursing.



Biomedical Laboratory Scientist Day

April 15th was international Biomedical Laboratory Scientist (BLS) Day. BLS day 2025 focused on *"Promoting Sustainability in Clinical Diagnostics"* and MUH were delighted to celebrate our BLS team who play a key role in diagnosis, quality development and assurance, treatment, research and development in the modern medical sciences. The BLS team held a fun awareness/information morning on the Link Bridge.



Health and Social Care Professionals (HSCP) Day

"Innovating health and social care; Embracing Technology, Research and Evidence" was the theme of National HSCP Day on April 9th. MUH were delighted to be joined by Sarah Shanahan, HSCP Regional Integration Development Lead HSE South West who acknowledged and highlighted the tremendous patient focused, forward thinking service delivery that HSCP's provide every day for the communities we serve. At a dedicated HSCP coffee morning, HSCP's hosted a Poster event to inform and educate staff on the many professions that comprise HSCP's.



Research and Innovation Corner



Tyndall National Institute hosted the ENTIRE European Digital Innovation Hub (www.entire-edih.ie) Digital Health-Tech Showcase Evening for Clinicians on Tuesday 20th May. It was a dynamic showcase event, highlighting the latest advancements in Digital Healthtech research.

The event brought together researchers and clinicians to explore innovative technologies aimed at addressing critical clinical challenges. Attendees had the opportunity to engage with a range of prototypes and demonstrators developed by Tyndall's multidisciplinary research teams, offering a first-hand look at emerging solutions in areas such as remote patient monitoring, wearable medical devices, and diagnostics. Exemplars of emerging digital health-tech for wearable, minimally invasive and implantable devices were demonstrated by enthusiastic researchers and engineers from Tyndall. The showcase not only demonstrated the technical capabilities of ongoing projects but also served as a platform to spark dialogue between the research community and healthcare stakeholders. Discussions throughout the event centred on how these innovations could be translated into real-world applications to improve patient outcomes and streamline healthcare delivery.

By fostering connections and promoting shared insights, the event aimed to pave the way for future collaborations that could lead to transformative healthcare solutions. It underscored Tyndall's commitment to being at the forefront of digital health innovation in Ireland and beyond, based on an ABC (Academic, Business and Clinician) collaboration model that ensures clinical utility and commercial opportunity for all new solutions under development.

Representation from Mercy University Hospital included the CEO, Executive Clinical Director, members of the Executive Management Board and the Consultant body.

Foundation Features



Welcome Rachel Stevenson

Earlier this year, the Mercy Hospital Foundation was delighted to announce the appointment of Rachel Stevenson as its new Chief Executive Officer.

Bringing nearly 30 years of experience in the voluntary sector, Rachel is a highly accomplished senior leader with a deep commitment to driving positive change.

Rachel began her career in London and has championed causes across disability, social disadvantage, Black and Minority Ethnic issues, and homelessness. For the past 23 years, she has served as Director of Fundraising at Cork Simon Community where she was also a member of the Senior Management Team. She played a pivotal role in transforming lives through her leadership and partnership-based approach to affecting social change.
Rachel is committed to building capacity within the not-for-profit sector and has volunteered on the Boards of various charities over the years. She is currently Chair of Charities Institute Ireland's Munster Fundraisers Network, further demonstrating her dedication to the nonprofit sector.

On her appointment, Rachel said: *"I am honoured to join such an incredible organisation and look forward to contributing to the vital work of my colleagues - our Foundation team, our voluntary Board of Directors, and the Mercy University Hospital staff. Together, we will continue to ensure that the people of Cork have access to the highest quality healthcare through 'The Mercy'."*

Welcoming Rachel to the role, Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Mercy Hospital Foundation, Eoin Tobin said: *"We are thrilled to have Rachel join the Mercy Hospital Foundation as CEO. Her extensive experience, passion for making a difference, and strong leadership skills make her the ideal person to drive our mission forward. We look forward to working with her to continue supporting the incredible work of 'The Mercy'."*

For more information on the work of the Mercy Hospital Foundation, visit ***www.mercyhospitalfoundation.ie.***

Volunteering in Uganda An Experience

Mercy Times was delighted to have the opportunity to meet with *MUH Pharmacist Eimear Lynch* and share her recent experience volunteering in Uganda as part of a multidisciplinary team of healthcare professionals with a charity called CHEEERS: Developing Healthcare Together (DHT).



"This past April, I travelled to Kisiizi Hospital in Uganda with CHEEERS: DHT, CHEEERS was established in 2015 by a group of Irish healthcare professionals and works together with developing communities to improve healthcare services and promote education and training of healthcare professionals. I first heard about the charity through a friend of mine from college who went the year previously, volunteering abroad is something I had always wanted to do, so when the applications for this year's team opened in October, I applied without hesitation.

Preparation

The lead up to the trip was busier than I had expected, there were training days in St. James Hospital, workshop planning and prepping resource materials and fundraising. All fundraising went directly towards projects on the ground, every volunteer self-funded their trip in its entirety. Through the process, I was overwhelmed by the support I received from friends, family, and particularly my colleagues here in the Mercy. I would like to especially thank the Pharmacy Department for the endless support I received from helping with a bake sale, generous donations and moral support!

Arrival

We arrived at Dublin airport early in the morning, all our bags splayed out shuffling prosthetic limbs and BNF's to distribute the weight accordingly. After 12 hours we arrived in Kigali, Rwanda. From there we made the 5-hour journey by jeep to Kisiizi, Uganda.

Kisiizi Hospital is an extraordinary place in rural south-west Uganda serving a very poor community. The hospital was established 45 years ago, Kisiizi continues to develop with a School of Nursing, increasing networks both local and international and continues to provide care for the most vulnerable including those with mental illness, children with disability and neonates. Its core aim is to share 'life in all its fullness' with patients' staff, community and visitors.

Life at Kisiizi Hospital

Every morning in Kisiizi begins with morning chapel where the Reverand gives an insightful sermon, followed by staff announcements. Our first morning we were given a tour. As we were guided along, the reality of what we were facing into began to reveal itself. I distinctly remember walking into the sterile surgical theatre and a bird was flying around the room.

Pharmacy Objectives

I was one of two pharmacists on the team. I was joined by Leah from Tallaght Hospital and we worked closely together on two main clinical areas the hospital had requested we focus on prior to arrival; antimicrobial stewardship and pain management. We had very little insight into the prescribing and medication management practices in Kisiizi, leaving us with much groundwork to cover during our first few days.

- **Antimicrobial Stewardship** - The treatment charts used in Kisiizi hospital did not lend themselves well to safe and effective antimicrobial use. To address this, I redesigned the treatment chart to include an antimicrobial section with the necessary prompts to promote antimicrobial stewardship. We facilitated education and training sessions regarding AMS, covering topics such as appropriate empirical therapy, de-escalation strategies and infection control measures.
- **Pain Management** - Our second week focused on pain management. We delivered training workshops to staff to address the importance of appropriate analgesic prescribing and administration, covering other important topics such as the signs and symptoms of opioid toxicity. Pain-scale diagrams were printed, laminated and distributed to the wards to better help patients express their pain needs and subsequently adjust regimens accordingly.

Psychiatry

I had the opportunity to work with the psychiatric team to review medication use within the mental health wards. The psychiatric service faced distinct challenges, including significant cultural stigma. In rural areas, conditions like epilepsy were sometimes attributed to spiritual causes, leading to the abandonment of affected individuals. For many, Kisiizi provided more than medical care—it offered a place of safety, dignity, and compassion. Despite limited resources, the dedication of the staff was evident in their respectful and holistic approach to care.

The CHEEERS Conference

As part of our wider CHEEERS DHT objectives, we had to organise and deliver a multidisciplinary healthcare conference at Kisiizi Hospital. The event attracted healthcare professionals from across Uganda, with this year's theme focused on "A Multidisciplinary Approach to the Care of the Patient in Pre- and Post-Operative Settings." My colleague Leah and I delivered sessions on medication management in the perioperative period, addressing principles of safe prescribing, analgesia, and antimicrobial use. In addition to delivering the teaching, we developed and distributed printed guidelines and reference materials for attendees.

Community Life in Kisiizi

The hospitality of the local community in Kisiizi was both generous and sincere. We were invited into the home of a woman named Louis, who graciously prepared a traditional meal for us, offering a glimpse into daily life and the warmth of Ugandan domestic culture.

Kisiizi were filled with a sense of communal connection and despite the challenges the community faced, there was a palpable sense of unity, joy, and resilience. Life was lived in the present, grounded in relationships rather than digital distractions. Culinary experiences were also memorable. Meals often consisted of hearty stews, rice, and locally grown vegetables, with occasional variations like macaroni and cheese or spaghetti Bolognese.

Cultural Experiences

The weekends offered valuable opportunities to experience Uganda's diverse wildlife and culture including an exhilarating safari trip and time at Lake Bunyonyi in outdoor huts with no electricity, the stay was a simple and immersive experience in nature. We also visited the Kigali Genocide Memorial in Rwanda—a difficult but significant experience that offered important historical perspective.

The Ugandan people I encountered were remarkably well-educated, compassionate, and resilient, demonstrating an inspiring ability to make the most of limited resources. Their kindness, faith, and determination are the quiet forces that sustain the healthcare system and community around them.

This trip was deeply insightful, emotional, and immensely rewarding. It also renewed my appreciation for the healthcare infrastructure and access available at home, highlighting the profound impact that even small improvements can have in low-resource settings."

If you have any questions about the trip or are interested in getting involved, I would be happy to provide further information. You can contact me at ***elynch@muh.ie***.



The Mercy Way!

Green Team Spirt

In association with Greenway57 (MUH's Sustainability Committee), the ICU and Pharmacy Teams of Mercy University Hospital used the St. Patrick's Day celebrations to launch their new joint Green Initiative Drive to progress projects and plans to improve the carbon footprint in clinical areas under the banner – "reduce, reuse and recycle".

Education, information and "green treats" were shared by staff and talks were given by the hospital's sustainability partners – Eileen O'Leary of the Green Healthcare Programme and Aileen Fitzgerald Regional Environmental and Sustainability Officer HSE South West.





University of Detroit Mercy

Mercy University Hospital were delighted to welcome back staff and nursing students from the McAuley School of Nursing (University of Detroit Mercy). The group were welcomed by Mission and Values Lead, Siobhán Kenny and Assistant Director of Nursing, Martina Hughes. After some presentations and information sharing, the group met with fellow Nursing Students from MUH. Such visits enable great opportunities for sharing, learning and collaborating with our global Mercy Family.

Endicott Students

On June 24th Mercy University Hospital (MUH) were delighted to welcome four nursing students from Endicott College, Cummings School of Nursing & Health Sciences. The nursing students travelled from Beverly, Massachusetts to complete a six-week clinical placement in MUH. The group are accompanied by their supporting professors during their stay in Cork.

Students have been allocated three clinical areas: ICU, CCU and ED. All participants were provided with a two-day orientation which was organised by the Clinical Placement Co-Ordinator (CPC) department and Martina Hughes (ADON NPDU). This orientation consisted of numerous talks from various departments within MUH.



HR Hubs

The Mercy University Hospital HR Team have introduced HR Hubs which will be held on a quarterly basis giving all staff the opportunity to meet the HR team, discover more about each area of HR and have the opportunity to address any queries they might have. There is representation from across key HR specialties – Wellbeing, Recruitment, Induction, Education and Learning, Medical Manpower etc. The Hub takes place across a 2-hour period and is informal in its structure – just drop by!





Assistance Dogs

On June 12th My Canine Companion joined the hospital's Senior Leaders meeting to raise awareness about service dogs and their important roles during hospital appointments. Staff were delighted to meet Mescal, Kim K, Polly and their humans!

Mercy University Hospital supports and recognises the legal right of Guide Dog and Service/Assistance dog owners to access facilities across our hospital. Under both Irish equality legislation and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Guide Dogs and Assistance dogs that serve persons with disabilities, persons who are blind, persons with autism or neurodiversity are permitted in all hospital areas.

Transition Year Programme

Mercy University Hospital (MUH) welcomed sixty transition year (TY) students between March and April of this year. The TY programme is a three-day programme ran over four weeks which is led out through the office of the Director of Nursing (DON) in conjunction with the Clinical Placement Co-Ordinator (CPC) team.

During this engaging programme, students experience hospital life through a series of educational talks and practical skills. TY students are also afforded the opportunity to become familiar with the hospital environment, through two ward rotations and three ninety-minute shadowing rotations.





NMBI Visit

On July 1st, the Department of Nursing welcomed Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) members Mary Devane Professional Officer, Dee Mooney Project Manager, and Delaine Pillay Administrative officer to Mercy University Hospital as part of the hospital's participation in the national pilot sites for 'Monitoring the Maintenance of Professional Competence'. Mercy University Hospital has made the step to the pilot scheme supported by a dedicated code and competency-based orientation programme.

The information session included a presentation on the Professional Competence Scheme and the Employer Facilitation Framework. It was an interactive and well received session. St Finbarr's Ward (the pilot site) participated and engaged with feedback and sharing of experiences, learning and poster presentations which referenced the scheme.

Orange Meringue Roulade with Dark Chocolate Chips

Gary Costello, MUH Head Chef



INGREDIENTS:

Meringue Mixture

- 4 egg whites
- 8oz castor sugar
- 2 tbsp icing sugar
- Vegetable oil for oiling tray

Orange Curd

- 2 whole eggs
- 1 egg yolk
- 100gr butter
- 175 grams castor sugar
- Juice and zest of 3 oranges

Cream and Chocolate

- 150ml cream whipped with splash of vanilla
- 50grms dark chocolate buttons shave chocolate and fresh mint

METHOD

First make your curd as this needs to cool

- Whisk egg yolk and whole eggs together
- Melt butter slowly on a low heat
- Add your orange juice and zest to this then add egg mixture
- Slowly on a low heat cook the mixture for 10to 15 mins until it becomes thick
- Be carful not to scramble it
- Transfer to clean bowl and refrigerate

For the roulade

- Line a tray 8inch Swiss roll tray (line with parchment paper and brush with oil)
- Whisk egg and sugar together to form stiff peaks
- Cook for 15-20mins at 180degrees
- Transfer out onto a lined piece of parchment that has been dusted with icing sugar
- Remove other paper and leave to cool

Assemble

- Place even layer of orange curd and then even layer of fresh cream and chocolate chips
- Role gently by using the other corners and role gently away from you to form a role

Serve on a serving plate and pipe cream onto top, adding grated orange zest. To garnish - add chocolate shavings and fresh mint.

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



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