MERCY UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL, CORK LIMITED

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mercy times

Introducing the Regional Specialist Memory Clinic at MUH

Mercy University Hospital (MUH) is delighted to introduce its new, dedicated specialist memory service which is now available for patients with complex cognitive presentations or suspected Young Onset Dementia (YOD) and is also now accepting referrals from GPs in the South of Ireland, via Healthlink.



L-R Aisling McDonnell -Candidate ANP Dementia, Annie O'Neil- Medical Social Worker, Ruth Sheehan- CNM2, Dr. Rónán O'Caoimh- Consultant Geriatrician, Mary O'Donovan- Occupational Therapist, Sharon Maher- ANP Dementia, Joanne McCarthy- Clerical Officer, Jenni Appadoo- Speech & Language Therapist, Laura Flynn-Dietitian.

Four Regional Specialist Memory Clinics have been funded and developed as part of the HSE National Service Plan (2021 and 2022). In line with Ireland's Model of Care for Dementia, the Regional Specialist Memory Clinic (RSMC) at Mercy University Hospital, Cork provides Level 3 memory services for individuals requiring in-depth assessment and structured post-diagnostic support. Assessment at level 3 is generally for complex, atypical, unclear cases, suspected Young Onset Dementia, or where the person wishes to participate in a more detailed and specific aetiological evaluation. Level 3 Assessment Is based in a regional Specialist memory Clinic and carried out by experts in the field of Dementia.

Who Can Be Referred

Located at the Lancaster Gate Medical Building (Eircode T12 Y63C), the clinic welcomes referrals for:

- Patients aged 65+ with atypical, complex or unclear cognitive symptoms
- Patients of any age with suspected Young Onset Dementia (YOD)
- Cases requiring specialist interdisciplinary diagnostic assessment

Note: This service is currently delivered through a Geriatric Medicine-led multidisciplinary team.

There is more inside…

- ***Introducing EMEWs***
- ***Answering the Call!***
- ***Congratulations & Acknowledgements***
- ***Mercy Moments!***

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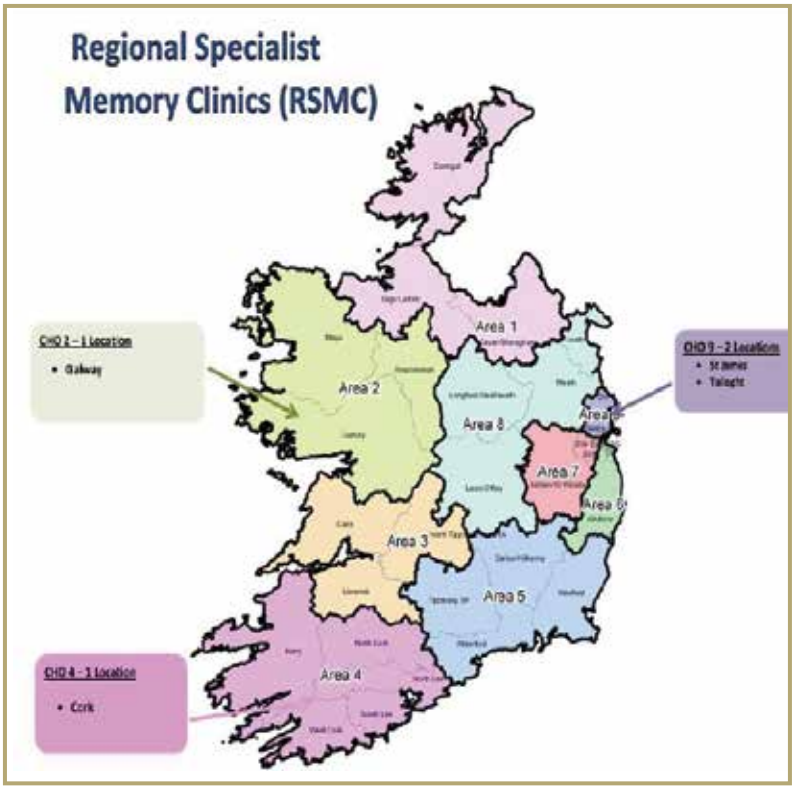
What Does the Clinic Offer?

The service is currently delivered through a Geriatric Medicine-led multidisciplinary team and offers the following services to patients:

- Specialist interdisciplinary cognitive assessment.
- Timely and sensitive diagnostic disclosure.
- Linkage to post-diagnostic supports.
- Case management by advanced nurse practitioners.
- Interventions supporting brain health and wellbeing.
- Involvement of:
  - Occupational Therapy
  - Dietetics
  - Speech & Language Therapy
  - Medical Social Work
  - Neuropsychology
- Signposting to community supports and Dementia Advisors.
- Coordination with local Level 2 memory services and primary care for ongoing care.
- Access to available clinical trials for eligible patients.



Additional Information

If you would like to learn more - the RSMC is part of the national dementia pathway outlined in the Model of Care for Dementia in Ireland (HSE, 2023).

Answering the Call: From Mountains to Coasts – CNM3 Barbara O'Donnell

After my photo appeared in a newspaper, I was asked about my volunteering with the Irish Coast Guard and, to be honest, I hadn't considered how this might reflect the values of the hospital (or be of interest to anyone else). I chose to work at the Mercy because it's a values-led organisation, and those values closely align with what matters most to me—especially team spirit. Anyone who works with me knows I'm all about the team and strong, supportive leadership! So, I have attempted to describe my role as a small part of a Coast Guard team and maybe encourage others to join or volunteer in other ways.

My journey into the world of rescue services began when I was just 18, working as an instructor at an outdoor education centre in the mountains of Wales. Back then, before mobile phones, we were added to the call-out list for the local Mountain Rescue Team (MRT). If a rescue was needed, the team leader would often ring around—usually starting with the local pub— and work down the list of land line numbers



until a team was formed and off we'd go! It was in those formative years, watching skilled team members tend to casualties on the side of the mountains, that my interest in nursing first began to grow.



After qualifying as a Registered Nurse, I continued my involvement with a MRT in Devon, concentrated on the vast Dartmoor National Park. My nursing skills became an asset—not just during rescues but in training scenarios too. I loved the sense of purpose and camaraderie that came with being part of a team, working together in unpredictable and often challenging environments, with the terrain and weather conditions impacting every situation. I have been blown off my feet, sunburnt and soaked through to the skin; I have been waist–deep in a river, underground in a cave and hanging off a cliff at various times!

When life brought me to Ireland, the mountains were suddenly far behind me, but the sea was right at my doorstep. A friend suggested the Coast Guard Unit (CGU) might need volunteers. Since I was already spending plenty of time on the water, I figured volunteering might also balance my karma—just in case I ever needed rescuing myself! My husband was already involved with the RNLI, but I've never been too keen on boats, so the CGU seemed like a better fit.

The Irish Coast Guard plays a vital role in rescuing people at sea or on land, organising immediate medical transport, and assisting vessels in trouble. With three marine rescue coordination centres (Dublin, Malin Head, and Valentia Island), and a network of search and rescue helicopters, boats, and volunteer units, they cover a huge area and provide an essential 24-hour service.

I joined the Old Head / Seven Heads Coast Guard Unit, which covers a wide stretch of coastline from just west of Kinsale to Clonakilty—one of the busiest areas in the country due to its popularity with surfers, kiteboarders, kayakers, and climbers; as well as beach-goers and coastal walkers. Our unit includes both climbing and search teams, and we're made up of volunteers from all walks of life.

We train regularly—life allowing—rotating between cliff rescue, search exercises, and first aid, often combining skills in realistic scenarios. We also run joint training sessions with the RNLI, beach lifeguards, and the Coast Guard helicopters (always a treat to get winched up!). Call-outs are frequently multi-agency events involving An Garda Síochána, the Fire Service, the National Ambulance Service, RNLI and rapid response teams, amongst others.

Our call outs can range from assisting someone off a beach into an ambulance to large-scale multi-agency search operations or cliff-face rescues. Some call-outs are minor; others are deeply emotional. But whether it's a positive outcome or a tragic one, there's a profound sense of purpose in knowing we're there to help someone—or their family—when it matters most.

One of the best things about the team is the people. I've learned more about cattle farming, pilot regulations, acting, film cameras, bee-keeping and rural life than I ever expected! Everyone brings something different—skills, knowledge, perspective—and that variety creates a resilient and dynamic team.

In my day job at the MUH, I'm used to leading and making quick decisions at work, but when I'm out on a Coast Guard task, I love being "just" a team member, taking instruction and playing my part. That is, of course, until there's a casualty—then the nurse in me kicks in, and I tend to take the lead!

Volunteering with the Coast Guard continues to be one of the most rewarding and humbling experiences of my life. It's more than just service—it's about being part of a team that shows up for each other and for our community, no matter the conditions. Every call-out, training, and shared challenge has pushed me to grow—not just in skill, but in character. I've learned the true value of trust, resilience, and teamwork, and I'm grateful to stand alongside such dedicated individuals.

Awareness Days

Awareness 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. Whilst Awareness Days are primarily educational at Mercy University Hospital, they can also be fun and inspirational and always come with some prizes, thanks to generous sponsors.

Over the last year, Mercy University Hospital staff have been busy highlighting the issues that matter to our patients and to our staff in the delivery of their care. Below is just a taste of some of the days that have been hosted by our dedicated staff across all disciplines …

World Stroke Day - "Every Second Counts"



Stroke is the leading cause of acquired adult neurological disability in Ireland. **1 in 4** of us will have a stroke in our lifetime. Every year, **around 7,500 people in Ireland have a stroke.** About 90,000 people live with the effects of stroke. The faster a patient gets to hospital, the faster assessment and treatment can be given

Turn September Red – Blood Cancer Awareness Month



The MUH Haematology Nurse Specialists marked Blood Cancer Awareness Month with an information stand to educate and inform on how Blood Cancer affects your body.

Blood cancer is caused by changes (mutations) in the DNA within blood cells. This causes the blood cells to start behaving abnormally. In almost all cases, these changes are linked to things we can't control. They happen during a person's lifetime, so they are not genetic faults you can pass on. Some of the most common types of blood cancer are leukaemia, lymphoma and myeloma. Some types of blood cancer affect children. Symptoms and treatment can be different between children and adults.

World Sepsis Day – National Guideline Launch



MUH celebrated World Sepsis Day with the launch of the ***National Clinical Guideline No.26 Sepsis Management for adults (including maternity)***, which was launched on 1st September 2025.

Palliative Care Week 2025 – "Living for Today, Planning for Tomorrow"



Palliative Care week 2025 was marked with an engaging and informative display on the second-floor link bridge. This year's theme, "Living for Today,

Planning for Tomorrow" invited everyone to reflect of the importance of living well while preparing for the future. Staff enjoyed testing their knowledge with a Palliative Care quiz, which sparked great conversations and learning across the hospital.

Congratulations to Niamh Duggan from Bed Management Unit, who emerged as our winner – Well Done Niamh !

Positive Ageing Week



Congratulations to Dr Kate McCarthy, Dr Alsubae and the multidisciplinary team who held a number of thoughtful and fun events for Positive Ageing Week which celebrates Ageing and the contribution and agency of older people. The focus of the week centred on Ageing being about living better with meaning, joy and a sense of belonging, not just about living longer.

Together with lots of challenges and information sessions, events also included the Great Geriatric Bake-off, a Panel discussion on "What Matters Most" and a special appearance by the Parkinsons Choir.



Mercy First: MUH Stoma Education & Support Morning



In a first for Mercy University Hospital, and the South West Region, Stoma Care Nurse's Rose (Roz) Donegan and Parvathy Unnithan (Pictured above) successfully hosted the first regional Stoma Education & Support Morning in September at the Clayton Hotel, Cork City.

The event was designed to provide essential information and support for individuals living with a stoma, their families and carers, including advancements in stoma care services. The morning offered a vital platform for learning and community connection and included:

Expert Talks:	**Presentations from professionals in stoma care.**
Q&A Session:	**Opportunities for attendees to ask questions.**
Peer Support:	**A forum for individuals to connect and share experiences.**
Product Exhibitions:	**Displays of relevant products.**
Refreshments:	**Light refreshments will be provided in a welcoming environment.**

Margaret McKiernan, CEO at Mercy University Hospital, welcomed the event, *"This event has been planned to provide valuable information and support. We aim to ensure that patients are aware of current practices and advancements in stoma care, contributing to their ability to receive quality service. It is an opportunity for attendees to hear from various speakers, engage with peers, and learn more."*

This Stoma Education & Support Morning exemplified Mercy University Hospital's commitment to providing accessible resources and fostering a supportive environment for its patients and their families. Due to the tremendous attendance and positive feedback, a further event is planned for 2026.

From Dreams to Reality:

Journey to Advanced Nurse Practitioner

Nearly eight years ago, Vaisakh Reghu arrived in Ireland, filled with dreams and determination. This year Vaisakh celebrated his graduation as an Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP) at Mercy University Hospital (MUH) and Mercy Times took the opportunity to acknowledge this milestone for Vaisakh and to share his reflection on an incredible journey made possible by the unwavering support of his remarkable healthcare family.



The Beginning: Finding Home in Emergency

"In 2012, when I first entered the doors of MUH after my journey from India, I was a mix of excitement and nervousness. However, my worries quickly faded away, thanks to the warm welcome from the nursing team and the entire Emergency Department (ED) staff, who ensured that my transition was smooth from the very beginning.

From the beginning, the ED became my cornerstone - a place where I honed my clinical skills and embraced the values of compassion, teamwork, and excellence that MUH embodies. Each shift offered new lessons, and every colleague served as a mentor in this supportive environment.

Expanding Horizons: The Injury Unit Experience

Motivated by curiosity and a desire to expand my skills, I made the crucial choice to transfer to the Mercy Injury Unit (MIU). This change offered fresh insights into patient care and enhanced my clinical decision-making. The nurses and multidisciplinary team in the MIU, which includes MTAs, doctors, physiotherapists, and administrative staff, welcomed me warmly and generously shared their knowledge and expertise, fostering an environment of ongoing learning and development.

The Dream Becomes Reality: An Incredible Opportunity

When the opportunity for the Candidate Advanced Nurse Practitioner (C-ANP) position presented itself, it encompassed all that I had aimed to accomplish in my nursing career. What made this moment particularly meaningful was that MUH had faith in me and offered me a remarkable opportunity to progress in my role. The ANP position represents independent, self-directed practice, delivering comprehensive patient care while adhering to MUH's five fundamental values.

Key Mentors and Champions

Throughout my development journey, my Clinical Supervisor offered outstanding guidance and oversight, which were crucial in honing my clinical decision-making skills and boosting my professional confidence. The two ANPs in the ED, with their extensive experience, served as inspiring role models, establishing a solid foundation for the ANP role in the hospital. They exemplify the role of ANP, as many ANP positions are now emerging in various departments across MUH. Their mentorship extended beyond clinical expertise, imparting the importance of independent practice and patient advocacy to me. My ANP colleagues and the nursing and multidisciplinary team in the MIU provided invaluable peer support and practical insights that were essential for my success.

The MIU ANP's encouragement during difficult times and willingness to share experiences made a challenging journey more manageable.

The Wider Support Network

The Director of Nursing, Nurse Practice Development Unit (NPDU), and Nursing Admin offered all the essential assistance required throughout this journey. Their timely support and commitment made the academic program attainable, accelerating my professional development and allowing me to make a significant contribution to our unit and the hospital.

Professional Recognition and Research

During this journey, I had the remarkable opportunity to present my Quality Improvement (QI) study poster at the Irish Accident and Emergency Meeting (IAEM) 2025, representing MUH. This QI study would not have been possible without the support of the team in the MIU and the stakeholders in the MUH. This experience significantly contributed to my professional growth and enabled me to make meaningful contributions to the broader healthcare community.

The Challenging Yet Rewarding Journey

The transition from C-ANP to ANP was a challenging journey marked by intense training, thorough study, and moments of uncertainty. During this period, I also completed the X-ray referral module, which was extremely beneficial and pertinent to my ANP duties. Despite these challenges, I was never alone, thanks to the support of my amazing colleagues and mentors. In my current role, I have the opportunity to work with clinical independence, making my own decisions while delivering comprehensive and holistic patient care, all while embodying MUH's five core values in every interaction.

Gratitude and Looking Forward

As I proudly share these graduation pictures, I am reminded that success is a journey we take together. I extend my gratitude to my mentors; your leadership was crucial to this accomplishment. To all my colleagues, thank you for being such a supportive professional family. To MUH, I am grateful for your faith in me and for offering this amazing opportunity to advance my role and turn my professional home into a place where dreams come true.

Here's to autonomous practice, holistic care, and continued excellence in serving our patients!"

Congratulations

Long Service Pins



During Mercy Week celebrations, in September, Mercy University Hospital is delighted to honour and acknowledge the long service commitment of staff to "The Mercy". A total of **8 staff** were acknowledged for 30 years of service whilst **38 members of staff** reached 20 years' service with a further **50 colleagues** receiving 10-year Pins.

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

Retirement



Congratulations to Dr Gemma Brown on her recent retirement. This significant milestone, and acknowledgement of service by Dr. Brown was marked by a special celebration where colleagues (past and present), friends and family joined in the occasion.

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

Farewell and Thank You – Non-Consultant Hospital Doctors (NCHDs)



Mercy University Hospital, similar to all other hospitals, has that bittersweet moment in June/July of each year as the hospital celebrates and bids farewell to one group of NCHDs as they journey onwards, whilst welcoming the newest cohort of Interns and NCHDs for the year ahead.

Hosted by MUH Executive Clinical Director, Prof David Kerins, MUH enjoyed an afternoon of celebration to mark the departure of this cohort of NCHDs and to thank them for their work and contribution to Mercy over the past year.

Congratulations to all the prize winners and best of luck to everyone as they journey onwards.



The Class of 2025 – Nurse Graduation Mass

On November 26th, 2025, Mercy University Hospital proudly celebrated the graduation of its newest cohort of nurses, all BSc Nursing Graduates of University College Cork (UCC), marking a significant milestone for these dedicated professionals. Each graduate has successfully completed a four-year comprehensive period of education and clinical training, demonstrating a clear commitment to the nursing profession. They now stand ready to apply their expertise and compassionate care, contributing directly to the health and well-being of our community. The entire Mercy University Hospital team extends its congratulations to these new professionals, celebrating their readiness to embark on impactful careers in healthcare.

Margaret McKiernan, CEO of Mercy University Hospital, shared her pride in the graduating class: *"Today, we honour a group of individuals who truly embody the spirit of nursing – dedication, resilience, and a deep commitment to care. Their achievement is a testament to their hard work and perseverance. We eagerly anticipate the positive impact they will make as they begin their careers in nursing."*

Rebecca O'Donovan, Director of Nursing, added: *"It is with immense pride and joy that we congratulate these graduates on reaching this significant milestone. They have shown incredible dedication and skill throughout their training, and we are thrilled to welcome them into the nursing profession. We are confident they will bring exceptional compassionate care to every patient they encounter and contribute greatly to the health and well-being of our communities."*

Introducing : Emergency Medicine Digital Early Warning Score (EMEWS)

"It's great to see modernisation in our hospital" (MUH patient)

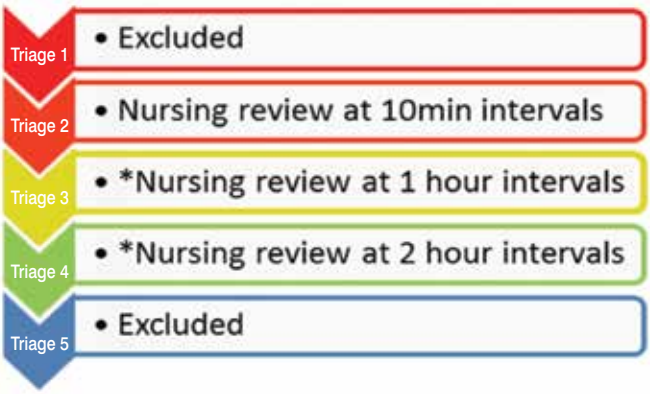
The Emergency Medicine Early Warning System (EMEWS) is a national clinical guideline developed by the HSE National Clinical Programme for Emergency Medicine. It aims to improve the safety and quality of care for adults in Emergency Departments (EDs) in Ireland. The guideline was launched in 2018 and is designed to help identify and respond to patients whose condition is deteriorating, ensuring time care and reducing crowding in EDs. In October 2025, Bernard Gloster (HSE CEO) mandated the full implementation of EMEWs in Eds nationally. This was in part fulfilment of Retired Chief Justice Clarke's recommendations (September 2024) to protect patients from harm.

The Emergency Medicine Programme (EMP) in collaboration with HSE Medical Device Equipment Management is advancing patient safety in Emergency Departments with the Digital Emergency Early Warning System (EMEWS).

Mercy University Hospital was one of two national pilot sites for EMEWS (St. Vincent's Hospital Dublin, being the other). The choice of Mercy University Hospital was spearheaded by ED Clinical Facilitator Anne Healy and CNM3 Emma Murphy and Mercy Times took the opportunity to speak with Anne and Emma to understand the significant impact EMEWs will have on patient care.

What is EMEWs

EMEWS is a monitoring and escalation guideline for patients over 16 years in the Emergency Department and is based on the Manchester Triage categories. These patients have undifferentiated conditions with a potential for rapid change in their physiological status and are at risk of deteriorating if unmonitored while they wait for clinician review.





It Takes a Village: Together with the CEO Dept of Nursing, Biomedical Engineer Emergency Department Multidisciplinary Team, NPDU , TSD, ICT, Research Manager, GPR and Information Security Team, Procurement Dept, Local Imlementation Team, gratidtude is extended to Emergency Medicine Programme, HSE Technology and Transformation, HSE Southwest, SyncroPhi, MDIMedical.

Benefits of Digital EMEWS?

The key benefit is improved patient outcomes as it enables early detection and response to deterioration reducing adverse advents. Efficiency gains eliminate manual charting and scoring errors and an enhanced workflow means potential reduction in staff cognitive burden and improved productivity

Real time visibility and enhanced clinical safety whereby Clinicians can instantly review patients' status including trending vital signs at multiple desktop sites.

Education and Training

Over the course of 2 weeks the Clinical Facilitator provided training, alongside Syncrophi, to 56 RGNs (87.5%), 20 NCHDs and 5 EM Consultants.

Training videos were installed on all workstations in the Department.

Workstations were available with test patients for 3 weeks pre the go live dates, for practice.

100% of ED Nurses have completed the HSELAND EMEWS Programme, and 75% of the NCHDs.

Timeline| Proof of Concept

The initial meeting with EMP, ICT and MUH ED was held on March 21st and it led from there …



The Way Forward

Early feedback shows the Digital EMEWs system improves timely observations, supports clinical escalation, reduces nurse workload and enhances collaboration between ED staff. Moving from paper to digital is expected to reduce errors, support audits and generate long-term cost savings. The feedback from the MUH pilot report will be integral to informing next steps for a national roll out.

The Mercy Gardening Club

The Mercy Gardening Club was launched in August and has been a huge success with keen interest across all disciplines and bumper attendance at lunchtime meetings. Three meetings have been held to date. The Club was formed by Christina Favier and Fr Pat McCarthy under the auspices of Greenway57 as part of its Green Spaces objective.

The Mercy Gardening Club provides an ideal opportunity to get to know people at work in a non-work-related activity and is a forum to exchange ideas, garner tips (and pass them on), hear from each other how to avoid mistakes or rectify the ones you keep making, and learn with and from your co-workers about how to enjoy taking care of your garden, balcony or windowsill, and enrich your life through gardening. There will also be a dedicated theme for each meeting for the time of year (autumn planting for a spring display, bird feeding in the winter months, dealing with pests etc.)

You don't have to be experienced; the Club members will be your teachers!

Contact greenway57@muh.ie for further information



GREENWAY57 mercy UNIVERSITY | HOSPITAL

Foundation Features
- Mercy Stars Awards 2025

Mercy University Hospital and the Mercy Foundation celebrated the exceptional staff, volunteers, and fundraisers who go above and beyond for patients and families at the annual Mercy Stars Awards on Friday, September 26th. This year's event took place at Rochestown Park Hotel, where stories of compassion, dedication, and teamwork took centre stage.

Hospital award winners included the **Clinical Team of the Year which was won by the Speech & Language Therapy Department**, a much-valued team in the hospital's Health and Social Care Professionals. They were awarded for their mindful and empathetic approach towards their patients, enabled by their strong team spirit.





The **Ward Team of the Year went to St. Mary's Ward**, which specialises in Care of the Older Person. The team were recognised for their ongoing determination and dedication in ensuring best patient outcomes, for patients and families alike, all of which is delivered with innate kindness, and compassion.

The **Support Services Team of the Year was the Maintenance Team**, who, as part of the Technical Services Department, were described as "the true backroom boys of the Mercy", and include plumbers, electricians, carpenters and multitask attendants who seamlessly ensure the practical functioning of the hospital every day.





Finally, the **Hospital Services Team of the Year was awarded to Medical Records**, honoured for their continued dedication and invaluable role in ensuring the efficient and timely delivery of patients' notes to ensure safe, effective and continuous patient care is sustained at Mercy University Hospital.

Speaking at the event, **Rachel Stevenson, CEO of the Mercy Foundation**, said "Mercy Stars is a special event that honours the tireless, dedicated work of the tremendous staff of the Mercy University Hospital, who so expertly and compassionately look after patients and their families. It also gives us an opportunity to thank our amazing fundraisers whose generosity of spirit helps us to achieve our goals in the Foundation to continually support the incredible work taking place in the Hospital."



Mercy on the Move

Whether you are new to the organisation or eager to get involved in fitness related activities, these groups are a great way to connect and stay active.

Hillwalking Club

Did you know that each year, some staff take part in hill walking? The season usually begins in April with smaller walks and the team progresses to more challenging hikes over the summer months. There are some fantastic sights to enjoy along the "Three Steps", including Torc, Mangerton and Carrauntoohil. If you'd like more information, or be part of the what's app group, please contact Kieran Coughlan in the Maintenance Department for further details.



Running Broadcasts

Whilst we do not officially have a run club, we are lucky to have many fitness enthusiasts in our workplace. Some of our staff regularly run together or take part in local races. If you would like to join the Running Broadcast what's app group to stay in the loop, please contact the Social Club who will connect you to the relevant staff.



Staff achievements

Congratulations to the following staff, who took part in fitness events throughout 2025.

- Peter Heffernan, Physiotherapy Department and Nan Kearney, Occupational Therapy on completing the Half Ironman in Valencia in April, which consisted of a 1.9km swim, a 90.1km cycle followed by a 21.1km run.
- Deirdre O Keeffe, CNS who took part in the Berlin half Marathon in April.
- Martina Hughes, Assistant Director of Nursing who was part of a team that secured a silver medal for competing at the East Cork Cross Country competition in October.



Denis Cronin, Maintenance Department who finished the Musgrave BHAA 5km in June.



Left to Right: Anne O Keeffe ANP & Bernie O Connor CNS, Palma 10k race in October.



Left to Right: Deirdre O Keeffe CNS, Jerry Foley CNS and Martina Hughes ADON, Spike Island 5km in September.

If you would like to include a staff member's achievements in our next edition, please contact Cleo Davies cdavies@muh.ie

Smoking Cessation Officer – Meet Ultan Devery



Ultan Devery has recently joined the HSE South West Health Promotion Team with a remit around Tobacco. As a certified Stop Smoking Advisor with advanced training in motivational interviewing, he guides individuals through quit attempts using tailored, evidence-based approaches—including MECC, the Stages of Change model, SMART goals, Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) support, and the National Centre for Smoking Cessation (NCSCT) treatment plan—to overcome ambivalence and drive sustainable behaviour change with smoking habits. His biggest tip for those ready to quit and commit to change? 'Don't put off until tomorrow what you can start today'

Curious about the free standard treatment programme, NRT options, or referral pathways? Contact Ultan on 0876556775 or email at ultan.devery@hse.ie

Support to Quit is free to all staff and patients of MUH

What's involved?

Behavioural Support:

- Doubles the chances of a successful quit attempt
- Helps the person create a personalised quit plan to deal with;
  - Cravings and withdrawal symptoms
  - Routine changes
  - Realistic expectation of stop smoking medications
- Review previous quit attempt history and learnings from smoking history
- CO (carbon monoxide monitoring)

Sessions can be conducted in person or over the phone:

Session One:	Pre-quit assessment
Session Two:	Quit Date
Session Three:	1 weeks post quit
Session Four:	2 weeks post quit
Session Five:	3 weeks post quit
Session Six:	4 weeks post quit

We also follow up at 6, 12, 26 and 52 weeks.

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT):

- NRT provides lower nicotine doses over about 12 weeks, gradually reducing dependence.
- It roughly doubles long-term quit rates compared to quitting 'cold turkey.'
- Using combination NRT (e.g. patch and gum) is more effective than a single product.
- NRT delivers only nicotine, not harmful smoke toxins like tar or carbon monoxide, making it far safer than smoking.
- Behavioural support combined with stop smoking medication (NRT), doubles chances again of staying quit, therefore smokers are 4 times more likely to stay quit.

We continue to offer free support and access to stop smoking medications to all patients and staff who would like to avail of them. For further information contact Ultan on 0876556775 or email at **ultan.devery@hse.ie**

MUH - A Tobacco Free Campus (TFC)

Mercy University Hospital is a Tobacco and E- Cigarette Free Campus, which is supported by National Policy.

What does this mean?

The Tobacco Free Campus Policy applies to all staff, patients/ service users, visitors, contractors and other persons who enter HSE grounds and facilities for any purpose. The policy prohibits smoking or use of e-cigarettes/vapes anywhere on the campus including doorways, entrances, walkways, roads, and car parks, cars parked on HSE campus grounds, bicycle sheds and bus shelters on HSE grounds.

Do you want to create a safer, healthier and cleaner workplace? Join our TFC Committee today.

The Mercy University Hospital TFC committee provides oversight of this implementation to The Mercy and we warmly encourage interested staff to join the committee and contribute to ongoing efforts that benefit our entire campus community. Your participation can help create awareness of the initiatives for all staff and encourage their involvement.

The committee meets every 2 months and provides a collaborative platform for staff to:

- Share ideas and feedback
- Promote health and wellness for all occupants
- Foster a cleaner, safer, and more environmentally friendly space



An Important Reminder

A message from MUH Fire Safety Officer, Karl Harris

FIRE EXITS ARE YOUR LIFELINE IN AN EMERGENCY - NOT A STORAGE SPACE.

In an emergency, **seconds count**. A blocked exit can mean the difference between safety and tragedy.

Please keep all escape routes clear at all times - **no exceptions, no excuses.**



YOU CAN QUIT

In early November, Mercy University Hospital, hosted a dedicated “Every Contact Counts” Workshop (a blended learning programme in collaboration with HSELand)

Why Making Every Contact Count is Important in the Health Service?

The Healthy Ireland Study 2022 found that 31% of the total population have a long-standing illness or health problem increasing to 53% of those aged 65 and older. This equates to approximately 1.3 million people in Ireland living with at least one chronic disease including diabetes, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or cardiovascular disease.

What is Making Every Contact Count?

During routine consultations with patient’s healthcare staff are having structured patient centred conversations with patients about their lifestyle related risk factors for chronic disease including alcohol, tobacco, physical activity and health eating.

Staff acknowledged the benefit of the training as it provided vital signposting of HSE and community services which many staff were not aware of. As a result, it gave participants the confidence to to bring up health behaviours in conversation now that they were aware of the community services to they could refer into.

"Meet the Green Buds: Growing a Greener Mercy Together!"



Mercy University Hospital together with its Green Team - Greenway57 - is excited to launch a brand-new sustainability programme designed to bring every ward unit, and department into the centre of our environmental efforts. Introducing the Green Buds Initiative — a hospital-wide network of staff volunteers who will champion sustainability, spark ideas, and strengthen communication between frontline teams, the Greenway57 Steering Committee, and hospital leadership.

The first official Green Buds Welcome Morning took place with great success on the 24 November 2025, launched by CEO Margaret McKiernan, who outlined how sustainability underpins the MUH Strategy 2025–2030. Attendees also heard from Greenway57 Chairperson, Brendan Brosnan and Mission & Values Lead Siobhan Kenny, followed by a presentation from Lynn Kettunen (Green Champion and initiative lead) on what it means to be a Green Bud, introducing the Green Champions (Teresa Marshall, Aoife Buckley, Jasmine Ronan and Andy Evans), and how every staff member has a role to play.

This initiative is open to ALL staff, clinical and non-clinical. Whether you want to lead sustainability in your area, support someone who does, or simply learn more, you are warmly invited to take part and join the other 50+ Green Buds.

All Welcome – Join Us and Get Involved!

To register your interest or to sign up as a Green Bud or BUD-DY if you haven't already done so, please get in touch at:

greenbuds@muh.ie

Our first Green Buds educational session takes place this February, focusing on energy saving at home and at work, aligning with the HSE Climate Action Calendar. All staff are welcome to join and learn practical, everyday actions. Stay tuned for more information. Let's grow a greener, healthier Mercy - together.

Living our Values: Lourdes 2025



Mercy Times recently met with Clinical Specialist Radiographer, Susan Collins, who reflected on her experience as a volunteer in Lourdes as part of the Cork and Ross Diocesan pilgrimage.

"Bright and early on the 19th September a group of over 400 pilgrims from the Diocese of Cork and Ross led by Bishop Fintan Gavin started their five-day journey to Lourdes on one of three flights to make the trip from cork airport that day. Among this group were eight members of staff from the Mercy Hospital who were travelling as nursing staff and helpers to assist with the care of 75 pilgrims of all ages with additional needs who were staying in a wing of the hospital located near the Basilica. Some of these staff members have made this trip on numerous occasions and for some it was our first time.

After a long delay due to technical problems with the aircraft , the assisted pilgrims finally arrived at the hospital still in good spirits despite a long and tiring day. We immediately set to work providing them with a much-needed cup of Barrys tea and something to eat before helping everyone settle into their rooms for the night.

The next few days were a whirlwind of masses and sacraments along with a very moving torchlight Marian Procession led by the pilgrims from Cork and Ross. There were also a couple of evening music sessions in the hospital with the music provided by some very talented young musicians from Cork schools and colleges who were also part of the pilgrimage and a few trips into the local village enjoyed by all.

I think I can speak for all the Mercy staff who travelled in saying that the trip was extremely rewarding and enjoyable and I would encourage other staff members to consider volunteering in the future. There is a role for anyone who is interested from nursing to helping in the dining room, accompanying pilgrims to various events etc. Being part of the Mercy family, this trip upheld the Mercy values especially those of compassion, respect and team spirit!"

Meet the Team: CNM3 Simulation Nurse Educator – Emma McElhinney



Emma McElhinney is pictured with Bernie McGee Resuscitation Clinical Nurse Specialist and John Battye, Cardiac Services Representative carrying out a training session on the new ACLS manikin purchased in July 2025 for ACLS and Simulation Training in the Simulation Room (Training Ward), CNE. Bernie acknowledged that "this is a great opportunity to expand the numbers trained in ACLS and to facilitate higher fidelity inter professional education for staff".

In her new role as CNM3 Simulation Nurse Educator, Emma McElhinney will be leading the rollout of simulation-based education across the hospital. Mercy Times caught up with Emma to understand her role a little bit more.

"Healthcare is always evolving, and so are the ways we teach and support those delivering care. One of the most exciting developments in this area is simulation, a hands-on approach that recreates real-life clinical situations in a safe, supportive environment. From managing a deteriorating patient to improving communication and teamwork, or even testing a new guideline, simulation gives staff the chance to practise, reflect, and build confidence, all without any risk to patients.

Working with the Simulation Steering Committee and both undergraduate and postgraduate course leaders, I'll help design, coordinate, and evaluate sessions that support learning across all disciplines. Based in the Centre of Nursing Education, I also manage the day-to-day running of the simulation facility, support faculty and learners, and make sure everything we do aligns with the National Simulation Strategy. My goal is to grow a strong, sustainable simulation programme that promotes clinical excellence, interprofessional collaboration, and most importantly, patient safety.

A Training Needs Analysis took place across departments and disciplines in November to find out what kinds of simulation will be most useful. This will help shape future programmes that are practical, engaging, and tailored to staff needs. At its heart, simulation is about teamwork, innovation, learning by doing, and trying out new ideas in a safe space. I'm really looking forward to getting started and meeting others who are interested in simulation."

If you'd like to find out more or get involved, please do get in touch at sim@muh.ie

The Laerdal Manikin

The Laerdal manikin's capabilities include Intraosseous and Intravenous cannulation, Intubation with all airway adjuncts, allows for manual BP and pulse recordings and allows for auscultation of lung and heart sounds. The manikin can simulate all cardiac rhythms, be defibrillated, paced, or synchronized cardioverted. Using a Simpad (remote control device) realistic patient scenarios can be created, to enhance learning and closely mimic real-life situations with observations/vital signs being displayed on a patient monitor and edited in real-time.

MUH Employee Choice Values Award

Mercy University Hospital celebrated 3 recipients of the Employee Choice Values Award in 2025 ...



Morgan Kelly Cooper receiving her Values Award from Operations Director, Margaret Lynch

Morgan Kelly Cooper (Catering) received her award under the Value of Compassion for "her empathy for and presence with patients - exhibiting and naturally living the values of the Mercy daily in the work she does and how much the Mercy Values are interwoven in her actions, and attitudes".

Catherine Mansfield (Department of Nursing) received her award under the Values of Excellence and Team Spirit for "not just being a team player but also a leader who brings her colleagues along with her in a collegial way and because her care and work exceeds all minimum standards".



Catherine Mansfield receiving her Values Award from Director of Nursing, Rebecca O'Donovan

The ePOE Team, Rebecca Gardiner, Ann McCarthy and Cassie Willis (Quality and Risk Management Department) received the first Team award under the Values of Excellence and Team Spirit for "facilitating a smooth transfer from paper-based incident entry to an electronic system, thus providing a high-quality safe environment for MUH patients, while supporting and enabling staff at every stage".



The ePOE Team (Rebecca Gardner, Ann McCarthy and Cassie Willis) receiving their Values Award from Deputy CEO, Brendan Doyle

A commendation, in the form of a specially designed Certificate is awarded to the remaining nominees to acknowledge their nomination for making Mercy real each day.

Employee Choice Values Award

COMMENDATIONS 2025

Ciara Browne
(Endocrine SHO)

Eoin Cahill
(Department of Nursing – ICU/CCU)

Lisa Casey
(Administration – St. Brigid's Ward)

Catering Department
(Support Services)

John Chalmers
(Support Services - Porter)

Pamela Coonghe
(Department of Nursing – St Finbarr's Ward)

Marion Coughlan
(Finance – Procurement)

Eileen Cronin
(HCA – Outpatients Department)

Kay Crowley
(Department of Nursing - Radiology)

Cleo Davies
(Personal Assistant – Office of the Operations Director)

Claire Dennehy
(Department of Nursing – Emergency Department)

Geraldine Fitzgerald
(Department of Nursing – Dressing Clinic)

Frances Galway
(Catering Department)

Shane Higgins
(Finance - Payroll))

Jane Horan
(Radiographer – Radiology Department)

James Kelly
(Administration – Medical Records)

Jenny Kent
(Clinical Nurse Specialist – Hepatobiliary and Pancreatic Surgery)

Margo Lynch
(Support Services – Catering)

Rosemary Lynch
(Medical Scientist - Biochemistry)

Sharon Maher
(Department of Nursing – St. Brendan's Regional Specialist Memory Clinic)

Gerardo Medina
(Department of Nursing – Mercy Injury Unit)

Brian Murphy
(Porter – St. John's Service)

Louise Newcombe
(Nurse Tutor – Centre of Nurse Education)

Niamh O'Brien
(Administration – Ward Clerk)

Bridget O'Callaghan
(Administration – Admissions Office)

Jenny O'Mahony
(Catering Department – St. Brigid's Ward)

Sharon O'Sullivan
(MCR Security – Emergency Department)

Andrew Owen
(Radiographic Services Manager)

Niamh Scanlan
(Administration – Catering Department)

Dave Sheehan
(Technical Services Department – Maintenance)

Noreen Smiddy
(Administration – Labs Supervisor)

Dhanya Vijayan
(Department of Nursing – St. Brigid's Ward)

Mercy Moments

Welcome An Taoiseach



Mercy University Hospital was honoured to host An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin in October. An Taoiseach engaged in a productive discussion with our leadership team: Ms Ann Doherty (Chair, Board of Directors), Ms Margaret McKiernan (CEO), Mr Brendan Doyle (DCEO/CFO) and Mr Paul Sweeney (Clinical Director, Peri-operative & Radiology).

The meeting focused on the hospital's ambitious Strategy (Mercy University Hospital Strategy 2025-2030) and critical ongoing campus developments all aimed at enhancing patient care and services for our community.

Congratulations Simon and Marion!



Congratulations to Simon Wood and Marion Coughlan who won the Cork Education Training Board Apprentice of the Year and Mentor of the Year respectively. Simon is presently completing his Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Supply Chain Management at the University of Limerick.

Health and Social Care Advisory Committee| MUH Safety Reps



The Health and Social Care Advisory Committee, having inspected Mercy University Hospital sought a case study to showcase best practice in two themes this year: Safety Representatives and Incident Reporting and Investigation. The HSA acknowledged the arrangements MUH has in place for Safety Representatives.

The Safety Representative Forum at Mercy University Hospital serves as a vital mechanism for improving workplace safety through collaborative action. A Safety Representative is an employee elected by their fellow employees, whose main role is to represent them to management on all health and safety issues. The Safety Representative provides a direct link between the employer and employees on issues that may be identified through workplace inspections or through direct communication with fellow workers.

Congratulations to all involved!



Mercy Day Mass

Bishop Fintan Gavin joined with staff of Mercy University Hospital to celebrate Mercy Day Mass in September. Mercy Day, September 24th was the date on which the foundress of the Mercy Order, Catherine McAuley dedicated the first house of Mercy (on Baggot Street), in 1827, thus bringing to life The Mercy Way. It is an occasion to honour the past, present and future and affords the hospital, as a healthcare provider, the opportunity to reflect on its Vision, Mission and Values.

Mercy Moments

Service Enhancement



Ward Clerks play a vital administrative and communication role in Mercy University Hospital supporting clinical staff and ensuring the smooth running of the ward.

To enhance this key role on the ward and to ensure greater visibility for patients, visitors and colleagues, the Ward Clerks reviewed various uniform options and settled on a design that best suited their role on the Ward.

The benefits in having Ward Clerks Uniform:

- To provide a professional image/good first impression, to give patients a greater sense of confidence and trust
- Distinguish employees of Ward Clerks, OPD designation
- Provide a sense of unity across staff designation
- Easily identifiable to MUH patients and staff
- To ensure equity and to improve a feeling of unity

Deck the Doors



The annual Deck the Doors competition was once again a great success as the hospital was turned into a Winter Wonderland!

This year's competition focused on Sustainability the theme was clearly reflected throughout, and it was inspiring to see the level of team spirit and creativity across all areas. The individuality and attention to detail shown in each space was impressive, with every team putting their own unique and thoughtful spin on the theme. Overall, it was a fantastic display of collaboration.

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.

And the winners are ...

The Overall Winner ("Billy Reuben Award")

St. Brendan's Unit

Clinical Area's

1st	**Emergency Department**
2nd	**St. Bernadette's Ward**
3rd	**Cardiology**

Non –Clinical Area's

1st	**PAC's Office, Radiology Department**
2nd	**Switchboard**
3rd	**Microbiology Laboratory**

Satellite Area

1st	**Human Resources Department**

Pan Seared Hake with Wilted Samphire Chorizo

Gary Costello, MUH Head Chef



Ingredients

- 4 x160 gr potions of Hake Skin on pin boned and skinned
- 150 gr diced chorizo
- 300 gr fresh Samphire
- 2 banana shallots
- Juice and zest of 1 lemon
- 50 mls of dry white wine
- 100 grams vine cherry tomatoes.
- 100grms diced cooked potato
- 50grms butter
- 0live oil
- Lemon pepper & rock salt
- 10grms Tarragon

Preparation

- Marinate hake in olive oil lemon juice lemon zest -Preferably overnight.
- Dice chorizo into cubes.
- Finely dice banana shallots.
- Half the cherry tomatoes.
- Wash samphire to remove any sand that may be still left behind.

Preparation

- In a hot pan add olive oil.
- Place hake skin side down until crisp.
- Remove from tray and place on parchment paper and finish in the oven for 12 mins.
- In a pot of boiling water add samphire for 2 mins remove and keep warm.
- In the same pan add chorizo to release the flavours -remove and set aside.
- Then add banana shallots and cook until translucent -add cherry tomatoes and chorizo baby potato back to the pan and cook through.
- Add white wine and reduce by half.
- Then add butter and tarragon.
- Add blanched samphire back to the pan.
- Season to taste.

Plating

- Place a piece of this mixture in the centre of the plate
- Then add Hake and garnish with lemon wedge.

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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