MERCY UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL, CORK LIMITED

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Mercy times

Hospital Without Walls Regional and Virtual

Mercy University Hospital (MUH) is delighted to extend its philosophy of creating a "Hospital without Walls" by delivering care for patients in an appropriate setting and a little closer to home. The Mercy Regional Rehabilitation Unit opened in April, while the Virtual Ward is up and running since late 2025.



L-R: Sonya Cotter, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Cork North and East, HSE South West, Dr. Kieran O'Connor, Consultant Physician in Geriatric Medicine, MUH, Prof. David Kerins, Executive Clinical Director, MUH and Margaret McKiernan, CEO, MUH

Mercy Regional Rehabilitation Unit

The Mercy Regional Rehabilitation Unit (MRRU), located in Blarney, officially opened in April under the governance of Mercy University Hospital, expanding integrated care in the community.
The centre provides Level 2 inpatient rehabilitation services, assisting patients in regaining strength and independence, while offering a supportive and professional environment for recovery after a hospital stay.

There are 30 beds allocated to older persons service and all single, en-suite rooms, offer privacy and comfort for patients. Patients have access to an onsite gym and therapy staff, supporting a holistic approach to recovery.
A multidisciplinary team provides individualised rehabilitation plans tailored to each patient's specific needs and goals. The team includes rehabilitation doctors, nurses and carers, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, dietetics, pharmacy, social workers, clinical psychologists and therapy assistants.

Care is delivered using personalised care plans, physical therapy to improve strength and mobility, occupational therapy for daily living activities, speech therapy for communication and swallowing difficulties, psychological therapy for mental health and wellbeing and 24/7 medical and nursing care. The approach emphasises daily therapy sessions, regular progress reviews, family involvement and discharge planning for a smooth transition home or to the next level of care.

There is more inside…

- ***Excellence in Learning***
- ***Behind the Scenes – Laboratory Medicine***
- ***Tea and Thanks for Volunteers***
- ***Mercy Moments/Staff Recognition***

Continued on page 2

The referral pathway for patients is via the geriatric medicine team at MUH; patients must have been an inpatient at MUH and reviewed by the geriatric team.

Margaret McKiernan, Chief Executive Officer of Mercy University Hospital, commented, *"The opening of the MRRU under MUH governance marks a significant step in our strategy to expand our patient care into the community and realise our vision of a regional hospital without walls. This unit embodies the Mercy philosophy of delivering quality healthcare with compassion, respect and dignity, in collaboration with our regional partners (HSE South/West). We are proud to provide an environment where patients can regain their strength and independence closer to home."*

Phase 2 of the MRRU development will be the opening of 20 neuro-rehabilitation beds in early 2027.

Virtual Ward

Since its opening last November, the new Virtual Ward at Mercy University Hospital has provided care for over 134 patients in their own homes. The Virtual Ward enables clinically stable patients to receive hospital-level care at home, under the guidance of a consultant and led by MUH nurses, using remote monitoring technology. MUH's virtual ward is the designated site for the South-West region and is part of a wider HSE national programme developed further to successful pilots elsewhere. This approach to patient care frees up hospital bed days which is a significant benefit not only for MUH but the wider region especially during busy periods.

The Virtual Ward is designed for patients who are well enough that they could go home with remote monitoring and clinical support. All equipment and education is provided to patients prior to discharge.

Anna Higgins MUH Service Lead has noted the positive reception from patients to the Virtual Ward and *"common themes emerging are that people are sleeping better at home, but they are very reassured that they can contact the ward whenever they need to"*.



L-R: Stephen Rafael, Anna Higgins, Alison Lane and Benjamin Razon



L-R: Margaret McKiernan, CEO, Ann Cummins, Rebecca O'Donovan, Director of Nursing and Siobhán Buckley, Director, CNE

Thank You for your Service!

Congratulations to Ann Cummins on the occasion of her recent retirement.

This significant milestone for Ann was marked by a special celebration from the Department of Nursing, joined by staff across the hospital.

As Director of the Centre of Nurse Education Ann will be remembered for her leadership and vision during her tenure.

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

International Days of Celebration

Mercy University Hospital is always delighted to celebrate staff on their dedicated international days of professional acknowledgement.

HSCP Day

HSCP Day was celebrated on April 15th. The day focused on the vital role Health and Social Care Professional's play in advancing practice, embracing innovation and continuously enhancing patient care and service delivery. MUH HSCPs hosted a coffee and information morning under the theme "Lead, Learn Innovate"





Biomedical Laboratory Science Day

International Biomedical Laboratory Science Day was celebrated at MUH on April 16th under the theme "Biomedical Laboratory Scientists Promoting Sustainability in Clinical Diagnostics". Stephanie Yates and her colleagues hosted an information and awareness morning on the Link Bridge for staff.

International Nurses Day

May 12th was International Nurse's Day and this year's theme 12th, "Our Nurses, Our Future. Empowered Nurses Save Lives" recognised and acknowledged the invaluable contribution and impact our Nurses make every day to patient care, wellbeing and the future of healthcare. The Department of Nursing hosted a coffee and poster presentation morning.







NCHDs – Farewell and Thank You

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.

Behind the Scenes at the MUH Department of Laboratory Medicine

Have you ever wondered where lab results came from? Do scientists still dilute liquids in test tubes and look down microscopes… or do all those numbers come from machines and computers now? And how do we know that the lab results are correct? Here we will take you 'behind the scenes' at the MUH Department of Laboratory Medicine.



L-R Claire Haran, Chloe Madden, Abbie Lougheed and Lisa Kennedy

Located on the 4th floor of the Lee View Block, the 'Mercy Labs' are staffed by a great team which includes scientists, laboratory aides, clerical staff, nurses, clinicians, managers and specialists. Even though we are rarely seen by patients, we all understand that lab results play a key role in their journeys. Working together to operate as a 24/7 service, we provide accurate and timely diagnostic information that supports clinical decision-making across all specialties. The Department of Laboratory Medicine combines scientific expertise, advanced technology, and a strong commitment to quality to ensure the best possible outcomes for patients.

"Small Beginnings"

Cork's Mercy hospital was one of the first in Ireland to recognise the importance of lab tests in diagnosing illnesses and monitoring patient treatment. The following extract is taken from A History of Mercy University Hospital, (James W Corbett and Siobhan O'Mahony, 2015).

"At a meeting of the Doctors and Superiors at St. Maries of the Isle on April 30th, 1952, among other items, the Pathology Department was discussed. As Dr. Sheila Loughnan wrote in her notes on the Laboratory, "out of small beginnings great things grow." The Laboratory certainly commenced in a small way being established in a small hut in the garden of the hospital. By 1965 it had completely outgrown this palatial accommodation and another request for funding was put forward to the Ministry of Health. This time it met with some success and a grant was made which enabled a much larger laboratory to be built. In the interim Dr Loughnan moved to a bigger shed, or Interim Laboratory, as it was known. The laboratory was completed in 1967 and continued in ever busier form for the next thirty years."

A New Home

As the workload and the staff numbers increased, another move was on the cards. In 1998 The Lee View Block, a substantial multi-department block was opened. Half of the fourth floor was given over to Pathology use and there were now larger separate laboratories for Histopathology, Biochemistry, Haematology and Microbiology.
In 2001 the Mercy labs began to accommodate placement students from CIT (Cork Institute of Technology, now known as MTU) and on January 1st, 2002, the Mercy labs first commenced a 24/7 'on call' service. This was a huge step forward for the laboratory. When histopathology services were centralised to CUH a few years later, the MUH gained a dedicated on-site Blood transfusion laboratory for the first time.

Accreditation

In 2008 the Laboratory Quality System was initially established at MUH for Blood transfusion, quickly followed by the other Departments. In 2011 Mercy University Hospital Labs first achieved accreditation by the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) and so met the international standard for medical laboratories: ISO15189.

"Great Things"

While lab testing first started in the Mercy many decades ago, today our laboratories consist of four main areas: Biochemistry, Blood Transfusion, Haematology and Microbiology. These laboratories are strongly supported by robust departments working on Quality, IT, Infection prevention and control, Haemovigilance and Near Patient Testing. By working closely with each other and with MUH clinical teams, the team on the 4th floor ensures prompt, accurate results round the clock that contribute to effective patient care and treatment planning.

Biochemistry

Biochemistry tests are mostly performed on the liquid portion the blood. This liquid (called serum) contains different levels of proteins and electrolytes that change in different

diseases. The MUH Biochemistry laboratory can therefore help to diagnose and manage huge range of conditions. Core testing includes renal, liver, cardiac and bone profiles alongside specialised areas such as endocrinology, tumour markers and osmolality.

In addition to routine testing, the department also provides specialised services including serum protein electrophoresis for conditions such as multiple myeloma, as well as faecal calprotectin and faecal occult blood testing. Referral pathways for immunology and dementia biomarkers further support the diagnosis of autoimmune, inflammatory and neurodegenerative disorders.

Haematology

While Biochemistry mostly focuses on the liquid part of the blood, Haematology mostly focuses on the blood cells. This lab provides full blood count (FBC) results, coagulation studies and specialised investigations, supporting the diagnosis and management of conditions such as anaemia, clotting disorders and haematological malignancies.

Like all labs, the scientists in Haematology work to run and maintain hi-tech analysers to perform tests. We also check them very regularly in numerous ways so that the results can be trusted. Extra testing is done if needed, including looking down microscopes or requesting tests from other labs. The MUH Haematology Department is proud to provide critical diagnostic and monitoring support for patients with blood disorders across both acute and outpatient settings.

Blood Transfusion

The MUH Blood Transfusion Department, comprising the Blood Bank Laboratory and Haemovigilance Office, ensures the safe and effective provision of blood products. If a patient needs a blood product (e.g. after a surgical bleed), very tight regulations apply. The MUH Blood Bank Lab performs essential investigations such as blood grouping, antibody screening, identification of irregular antibodies, and compatibility testing. These processes ensure that every patient receives the safest and most appropriate blood product for their needs.

Supporting a wide range of clinical services—including surgical care, trauma and haematological conditions—the department operates 24 hours a day and provides expert clinical advice when required. Compliance with EU Blood Directive, ISO 15189:2022 and AML-BB standards is central to the service, with regular external audits ensuring the highest levels of safety and quality.



Department Leads: *L-R Paul Hannigan Blood Transfusion, Cait White Laboratory Medicine IT , Katie Browne Biochemistry, Joan Dinneen NPT , Eithne Barden Laboratory Manager , Valerie O' Sullivan Quality, Audrey Finlay Haematology, Eddie McCullagh Microbiology.*

Microbiology

Here at MUH, the Diagnostic Microbiology Laboratory investigates a broad range of infectious diseases. The service encompasses bacteriology, molecular diagnostics and serology. Molecular testing focuses on respiratory, gastrointestinal, bloodstream and central nervous system infections. These rapid diagnostic capabilities support early detection and timely clinical intervention.

A dedicated clinical advisory team, including Consultant Microbiologists and Specialist Registrars, provides expert interpretation and guidance. Close collaboration with the Infection Prevention and Control team, supported by a surveillance scientist, enables ongoing monitoring of infection trends and the early identification of potential outbreaks, contributing to patient safety and public health.

Near Patient Testing

The newest section of the MUH Department of Laboratory Medicine is the Near Patient Testing (NPT) department. NPT is one of the fastest-growing areas in biomedical science. Advances in technology in recent years have made it possible to carry out a wide range of laboratory tests close to the patient. Using compact, state-of-the-art devices, NPT provides accurate results within minutes, enabling healthcare professionals to make timely, evidence-based decisions that support effective treatment.

Here in the MUH, over 120,000 quality assured tests are performed each year across all areas of the hospital, from the Emergency Department to ICU to OPD. The new NPT department ensures that the same robust quality assurance standards upheld in the laboratory are applied to laboratory devices used in clinical settings.

Continued on page 6

A Commitment to Quality

Quality underpins every aspect of laboratory practice. The MUH laboratory service has been accredited to the international ISO 15189 standard since 2011, demonstrating a sustained commitment to excellence.

This accreditation ensures that all laboratory processes are independently assessed and continuously improved, providing assurance that results are accurate, reliable and produced to the highest international standards. It reflects strong systems for training, equipment management and quality assurance, as well as the dedication and professionalism of the laboratory team.

Supporting Care Through Technology

Laboratories can generate results all day and all night (and we do!) but this would all be pointless unless we can get those results back to the people who need them. Laboratory Medicine IT plays a key role in ensuring the seamless and secure flow of information. The MUH laboratory uses the Apex iLaboratory system, a Laboratory Information System shared across the HSE, which manages processes from test request through to reporting.

Results are made available electronically to hospital clinicians and are also communicated to GPs via the Healthlink portal, supporting timely and informed decision-making. Future developments include the planned introduction of electronic test ordering through the Integrated Clinical Management system, which will further streamline workflows, improve efficiency and enhance patient care.

Working Together for Patients

Across all disciplines, the laboratory team is united by a shared goal: delivering a high-quality, patient-centred diagnostic service. We are proud to provide reliable results round-the-clock. From routine testing to specialised investigations, and supported by strong quality systems and advanced technology, the laboratory continues to play a critical role in ensuring safe, effective and responsive patient care here at MUH Cork.

Remembering Dariusz and Annette



Dariusz Pollom

It was with great sadness that the staff of Mercy University Hospital, learned of the death of Dariusz Pollom on November 28th, 2025.

Dariusz joined Mercy University Hospital in November 2020 and was a much-valued member of the HSSD Operative Decontamination team within the Endoscopy unit.

Remembered for his commitment and professionalism in his role, Dariusz is more fondly remembered as not just a work colleague, but a kind, caring and supportive friend. Always cheerful and smiling, Dariusz was a pleasure to meet and know.

Missed beyond words and will be forever remembered by all – May he Rest in Peace



Annette O'Driscoll

It was with great sadness that the staff of Mercy University Hospital, learned of the death of Annette O'Driscoll on December 3rd, 2025.

Annette started in Mercy University Hospital in September 1989 and was a much cherished member of the Catering Department. Annette worked across various areas of the hospital in her 36 years of service to the Mercy.

Remembered for her dedication and strong work ethic, Annette will be forever remembered for her bright smile, gentle disposition, kindness, and generosity that was appreciated by patients and colleagues alike.

Sorely missed and always in our thoughts – May she Rest in Peace

Mercy on the Move - Making Mercy Real



The Mercy Running Club were proud to be involved in raising critical awareness and supporting vital charities by participating in the Cork leg of the FTB Brothers extraordinary challenge of 33 Marathons in 33 Days to raise awareness of frontotemporal Dementia and support The Alzheimer Society of Ireland. The team showed their support to Jordan and Cian Adams running with them on the Cork City stage.

Jordan and Cian's mission is deeply personal. Their mother, Geraldine Marie Kennedy, whose parents were from Longford and Leitrim, was diagnosed with early onset Frontotemporal Dementia at 48 years old. She passed away in 2016 at the age of just 52. FTD has devastated their family for generations. Jordan and Cian's grandmother was one of six siblings, and four of those six developed familial Frontotemporal Dementia. Between those four siblings, there were 13 children, 8 of which went on to develop and pass away from FTD, including Jordan and Cian's mum Geraldine and aunt Anne.

The challenge started at the London Marathon on Sunday, 26th April 2026, which Jordan ran with a 25kg fridge on his back to represent the weight of the knowledge that he will get FTD in his 40s. The Irish Challenge began on Monday 27th April when Jordan completed the first of the 32 Irish marathons in Antrim. Following a marathon in every county of Ireland, Jordan completed the challenge on Thursday 28th May in Dublin.

50% of all funds raised will be donated directly to The Alzheimer Society of Ireland, supporting families living with dementia across Ireland. The remaining funds will support the work of The FTD Brothers Foundation, which focuses on awareness, education, research, and support for families affected by dementia.

Funds raised for The Alzheimer Society of Ireland will support essential services including day care, home care, dementia advisers, family support groups, and the National Helpline — all of which provide lifelines to families navigating a dementia diagnosis.



Clinical Audit & Quality Improvement Day

Mercy University Hospital (MUH) were delighted to host its 8th Clinical Audit and Quality Improvement Day on June 25th, 2026.

Staff across the hospital are invited to submit posters which showcases the tremendous patient centred initiatives underway at MUH and facilitates the sharing of knowledge and best practices throughout our hospital. It also provides an opportunity for the hospital to acknowledge the exceptional dedication and continuous improvement efforts of our multi-disciplinary teams. A total of 57 posters were submitted and viewed by staff and invited guests. MUH were also delighted to welcome guest speaker HSE Chief Executive Officer, Ann O'Connor (virtually).



Sarah Gleeson receiving the Sr Laurentia Perpetual Award – Overall Achievement of Excellence from CEO Margaret McKiernan

Congratulations to the MUH Clinical Audit Team for another successful day.

And the winners are:

Sr. Laurentia Perpetual Award – Overall Achievement of Excellence

Women's Health in Inflammatory Bowel Disease: Development and National Roll-Out of the First Patient and Clinician Education Booklet of its Kind in Ireland, Informed by Primary Research Across the Female Lifespan.

Project Team: *Sarah Gleeson- Advanced Nurse Practitioner IBD, Inflammatory Bowel Disease Service, Department of Gastroenterology, Mercy University Hospital, Cork*

Clinical Audit Category

Embedding Prolonged Beta-Lactam Infusions in the Critical Care Unit: A Quality Improvement Journey in Change Management

Project Team: *Áine Mulvany[1], Rebecca MacSweeney[1], Dr Laura Kennedy[2], Kat Hurley[1], Maeve Dennehy[1], Ciaran Halleran[1], Teresa Marshall[3], Dr Margaret Creedon[4], Dr Niamh Mullane[4], Eoin Cahill[5], Dr Jose Domenico Stavola[4], Dr Michelle O'Mahony[2,] [1]Pharmacy Department, [2]Anaesthetics, [3]ICU Clinical Facilitator, [4]Clinical Microbiology, [5]CNM3 Critical Care*

Improving Patient Experience Category

Streamlining Ureteric Stone Management through Structured Nurse-Led Follow-up

Project Team: *Siún O'Toole, Caraíosa Harrington, Derek B. Hennessey, Department of Urology, Mercy University Hospital*

Improvements in Effective Care and Support Category

Evaluating the Benefits of Transitioning from Intravenous to Subcutaneous Systemic Anti-Cancer Treatment. A review of healthcare efficiency and patient satisfaction.

Project Team: *Orlaith Coleman (CNM2 Oncology / Haematology Services), Aoife Walshe (CNM3 Oncology / Haematology Services)*

Improved Use of Resources & Information Category

A Plan for Every Patient - A multidisciplinary quality improvement initiative to ensure senior decision-making and safe discharge planning across weekends and bank holidays.

Project Team: *D. McLoughlin (Clinical Director, Medicine & Laboratory); patient flow CNM2s; patient flow managers; operations manager; medical directorate; and representatives of the General Medicine, Gastroenterology, Respiratory Medicine, Endocrinology, Inclusion Health and Nephrology teams; T. Slattery, M. O'Keeffe, D. Harrington, D. Coleman, K. McCarthy and D. Ganesan.*

The Colleagues Recognition Award (decided by staff vote)

The Effects of Implementation of Dermatology Referral Proforma on Dermatology Referral Quality: A quality improvement study.

Project Team: *Adina Elena Zagoneanu, Martin Ho, Eleanor Marks, Kate Murphy, Katelyn Reilly, Joey Harrington, Mary Bennett, Lesley Ann Murphy, Kieran O'Connor. Department of Dermatology SIVUH & Department of Geriatrics, Mercy University Hospital.*

#ThisIsMercy

Amputee Support Group (POLAR Unit)

Senior Occupational Therapist, Laura O Halloran, has recently established a dedicated amputee support group within the POLAR (Prosthetic Orthotic Limb Absence Rehabilitation) Unit. This initiative has been developed to provide a supportive, informative and empowering environment for individuals living with limb loss.

The group offers a wide range of benefits for participants, including:

- Opportunities for peer support and shared experiences
- Improved confidence and emotional wellbeing
- Access to practical advice and problem-solving strategies
- Education on key topics such as prosthetic use, skin care, mobility, and fatigue management
- A safe space to discuss challenges and achievements
- Encouragement of independence and self-management

The group meets once a month for a two-hour session. Each meeting includes an educational component, where different topics relevant to amputee rehabilitation and daily living are explored. The second half of the session focuses on peer support, giving members the opportunity to connect in a relaxed setting over a cup of tea or coffee.

Feedback from patients has been overwhelmingly positive. Participants report finding the group extremely beneficial, particularly valuing the opportunity to learn from others with similar experiences and to feel supported within a community setting. There is great enthusiasm for continued meetings, and members are already looking forward to upcoming sessions.

This group is a fantastic example of the holistic, patient-centred approach within the POLAR Unit, supporting not only physical rehabilitation but also emotional wellbeing and social connection.



POLAR Unit Education and Training Day 2026

The staff of the POLAR (Prosthetic Orthotic Limb Absence Rehabilitation) Unit at Mercy University Hospital organised a Training and Education Day for community-based Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists on March 24th, 2026.

The POLAR Unit is the regional specialist centre for the inter-disciplinary management of persons with limb loss or absence providing specialist care that is patient-centred and outcome-focused. The POLAR Unit also has an important role in promoting excellence and best standards of practice, as well as being a resource for our professional colleagues, patients and their carers.

Building Relationships

The aim of the training day was to increase awareness of the POLAR service, to address local training needs on how best to manage the patient with amputation or limb absence, and to foster links with our community-based colleagues. Creating such links between in-patient, out-patient and community services facilitate seamless co-ordination of care and access to information and services.

Voices of Expertise and Experience

Our community colleagues travelled from various locations across counties Cork and Kerry. Members of the POLAR Unit inter-disciplinary team provided a series of talks aimed at providing an overview of limb absence rehabilitation and on the roles of the different health care professionals within the POLAR Unit. The day also included practical aspects related to prosthetic prescription, fitting and prosthetic limb delivery.

Additionally, a patient with amputation, who had participated in the prosthetic rehabilitation program at the POLAR Unit, kindly facilitated a session, providing our attendees with a wonderful opportunity to ask questions and learn more about their experience firsthand and from a service-user perspective. A note of thanks to Tracey Dineen, Patient Liaison & Access Officer, for facilitating this.

The Education and Training Day proved to be a great success. Overall, the feedback was extremely positive with high satisfaction expressed by participants, and it will be now repeated on an annual basis.





Best of Luck Jessie!

Jessie O Flynn, Senior Radiographer, has qualified for the amateur Showjumping competition at the Dublin Horse Show to be held at the RDS from August 5th to 9th. Qualifying for the Dublin Horse Show is a fantastic achievement in Irish equestrian sport and all at the Mercy will be wishing Jessie the very best of luck!

In Gratitude - End of Life Care





Mercy University Hospital recognises the significance of each death in our hospital and has a comprehensive and compassionate programme in place to maintain high standards in this area. Led out by our End-of-Life Coordinator, Edel O'Neill, MUH works in partnership with the Hospice Friendly Hospital's Programme who seek to ensure that compassionate end-of-life, palliative, and bereavement care is central to hospitals in Ireland.

Mercy University Hospital is also very grateful to its community volunteers who through their talents and skills make a meaningful contribution to patient care, at times of personal crisis and especially at end of life.

To honour this wonderful community of volunteers, MUH hosted a Thank You and Tea morning on January 12th for volunteers from Iris House Cork Cancer Support, the Wilton Knitting Group and the Sisters of Mercy for the generosity of their time and donations to our patients and their loved ones in knitting and crafting beautiful blankets and paired hearts. The blankets and hearts are used for and by patients and their families at end-of-life care and MUH is incredibly grateful for the positive and touching impact these have on our patients and their loved ones.





Learn More – Final Journeys Workshop

Final Journeys is a one-day educational workshop for all hospital staff at the MUH, aimed to improve the delivery of end-of-life care by promoting a culture of awareness and personal empowerment. Please contact NPDU at 5400 or email npduadmin@muh.ie to book your place directly.

Patient Centred Innovation - Endoflip Machine



Dr Ciaran McDonald, Consultant Gastroenterologist and Interventional Endoscopist recently shared with Mercy Times the impact that the recently commissioned Endoflip machine will make to patient care at Mercy University Hospital (MUH).

The EndoFlip machine* was procured through the Mercy Foundation and is supported for the next 3 years via the Foundation. It was delivered and commissioned by Medtronic and represents a serious investment in advanced technology for MUH.

On June 27th, the first list of 6 patients had their Endoflip assessments performed in MUH, including patients from around the country as MUH is now one of 4 centres in Ireland performing this procedure and one of only 2 with this latest model.

The Endoflip assessments will have a vital bearing on pre surgical, peri surgical and post-surgical decisions and spans UGI Surgery, Advanced GI endoscopic surgery and GI Physiology. This novel procedure will now support the POEM program (only hospital in Ireland actively performing this procedure) for achalasia patients and compliments the manometry service offered in one of the busiest GI physiology Labs in the country for oesophageal dysmotility assessments/ work up. It will also benefit some of the most unwell patients post anastomotic UGI surgery for cancers.

The MUH Advanced Nurse Endoscopy Team, with the support of Colm Giles and Peter Harkin from Medtronic got up to speed effortlessly with the equipment.

**The Endoflip machine provides real-time measurements of the pressure and dimension of the oesophagus during endoscopic evaluation and surgical procedures. The Endoflip is a well-tolerated, convenient way to assess oesophageal motility that can inform the need to refer patients to high resolution manometry (evaluation of the pressure and co-ordination of muscles in the gastrointestinal tract).*

Excellence in Learning

Simulation Experience for Undergraduate Nursing Students

Recently while completing their clinical placement in Mercy University Hospital, the third year UCC undergraduate nursing students had a fantastic opportunity to participate in two engaging Nursing simulations. The simulation was facilitated by Emma McElhinney (CNM3 Simulation Nurse Educator) together with members of the Clinical Placement Co-ordinator (CPC) team in the Centre of Nurse Education.



The simulation focused on patient deterioration and escalation pathways. The simulation also incorporated the new Sepsis guidelines and there was a strong focus on the use of the ISBAR communication tool. The sessions proved to be a valuable learning experience for all involved, promoting effective communication, critical thinking, and enhancing patient safety. The simulation was positively evaluated from the undergraduate nursing students, and we look forward to planning simulations in the future.

Mercy University Hospital Welcomes HIRAID

(History, Red Flags, Assessment, Interventions, Diagnostics)

The Emergency Department (ED) of Mercy University Hospital (MUH) has been selected as a pilot site for HIRAID. HIRAID is the only validated framework designed to give emergency nurses a structured, evidence-informed approach to patient assessment, management and vital communications with patient's carers and colleagues. The HSE Emergency Medicine Programme received funding through the HSE Spark Innovation Programme* to trial this Australian tool and Sarah Watkins - Nurse Lead, National Clinical Programme in Emergency Medicine HSE – is guiding the programme in collaboration with ED Clinical Facilitator Anne Healy.



Education Programme

MUH was delighted to welcome Prof Kate Curtis, University of Australia, Prof Julie Considine, Deakin University and Dr Margaret Murphy, Westmead Hospital (NSW) who facilitated a dedicated Train the Trainer session on June 8th, MUH ED nursing staff completed a specialised education programme designed to develop deep learning and high level thinking around:

- Patient Assessment
- Identifying factors for adverse outcomes
- Swiftly recognising and responding to clinical deterioration

HIRAID specific training will be completed across June and July with 41 staff already signed up to attend. Very positive early steps and the next steps are to train staff, implement and survey the results over the coming months.

**HSE Spark Funding empowers frontline healthcare staff to develop, implement and showcase innovative solutions that improve patient care and health service delivery.*

From Cork to Milan – ESGENA Conference

(European Society of Gastroenterology and Endoscopy Nurse and Associates)

From 14–16 May, 2026, the European ESGE Days and ESGENA Conference took place in Milan, bringing together specialists in gastroenterology, endoscopy, and nursing care from across Europe. This year, the Mercy Hospital Gastroenterology Department was proudly represented by Olga Musial, Bowel Screen CNS, and Tina Collins, Endoscopy Pre-Assessment CNM2.

Education and Inspiration

During the conference, the representatives attended ESGENA meetings, which offered valuable networking and educational opportunities for nurses working in gastroenterology and endoscopy. Professor Iacucci, a distinguished Gastroenterologist, actively involved in research at Mercy University Hospital and University College Cork delivered an inspiring lecture on "AI, Chromoendoscopy and Histology – How to Improve Surveillance Endoscopy.". Her presentation highlighted the growing role of artificial intelligence and advanced endoscopic techniques in improving patient outcomes and the quality of surveillance endoscopy.

Expand and Exchange

In addition, the conference allowed the participants to expand their knowledge and understanding of patient care during complex endoscopic procedures such as ESD (Endoscopic Submucosal Dissection), EFTRD, and POEM procedures. These sessions provided valuable insights into advanced techniques, patient preparation, peri-procedural nursing care, and post-procedure management, supporting the delivery of safe and high-quality patient care.

Participation in international

conferences such as ESGE and ESGENA provides an excellent opportunity to expand professional knowledge, exchange experiences with healthcare professionals from different countries, and stay updated on the latest developments in gastroenterology and endoscopy nursing care.

Congratulations Olga

During the conference, Olga Musial participated in a quiz competition at the Micro-Tech stand and, thanks to achieving an excellent result, was awarded a place on an advanced ESD training course in Düsseldorf. This achievement was a significant professional recognition and an excellent opportunity to further develop expertise and knowledge in advanced endoscopic procedures.



L-R: Tina Collins, Olga Musial with ESGENA president Deepa Ghandi and Sean Connolly BowelScreen ANP, Mater Hospital.

Foundation Features

Official Opening of Mercy Cancer Care Centre

The Mercy Foundation were delighted to welcome Taoiseach Micheál Martin to the official opening of the Mercy Cancer Care Centre on June 6th.

The Cancer Care Centre offers a supportive environment for patients of Mercy University Hospital who have received a cancer diagnosis and is the base for the hospital's psycho-oncology service.

The opening marks an important milestone in enhancing cancer support services for patients and their families, ensuring compassionate care is available at every stage of their journey.



Pictured with An Taoiseach are Rachel Stevenson, CEO of the Mercy Foundation, and Eoin Tobin, Chair of the Board of the Mercy Foundation.

Donal Dempsey Award



Rachel Stevenson, CEO of the Mercy Foundation, presented the Donal Dempsey Award to Amy Edwards Murphy following her selection as Best Surgical NCHD Teacher by her student colleagues.

Make Your Mark – Thank You

The much-loved annual 'Make Your Mark on Cancer' charity walk returned on Sunday, July 19th, bringing together hundreds of walkers and runners in support of cancer patients receiving treatment at the Mercy University Hospital.

Now in its 13th year, the 22km walk from The Viaduct to Bandon Town Hall has become one of Cork's most inspiring community events, raising vital funds for The Mercy Foundation to support services and care for cancer patients and their families across Munster.

Founded in memory of Bandon man Mark Prendergast, who died from testicular cancer in 2012, the event has raised an extraordinary **€622,000** to date. More than a fundraiser, 'Make Your Mark on Cancer' is a powerful expression of community solidarity, honouring those affected by cancer while helping to improve care for future generations.

Mercy Stars

The Mercy Stars Awards are back; and the 2026 event promises to be a special evening for the many unsung heroes associated with Mercy University Hospital.

Organised by the Hospital and the Foundation, these awards are a celebration of all that is great about the staff behind Mercy University Hospital's care for patients and their families in Munster.

The event, which will be held at Rochestown Park Hotel, on **Friday, September 11th** will recognise individuals and teams, as well as fundraising volunteers, who go above and beyond for patients and their colleagues at The Mercy.

Peers, colleagues and managers will soon be invited to nominate individuals who deserve to be officially recognised. This year, patients and their families and friends will also be invited to put forward their nominations, to make sure the Awards recognise those who inspire others and deliver beyond expectations for Mercy patients every day.



MUH Special Olympians

Congratulations to Laura Ahern, Audrey Galvin and Meghan O'Halloran who were part of the Munster Team participating in the recent Special Olympics Ireland Games 2026.



The Games are the largest inclusive sporting event with 1200 athletes competing across 12 events. A special celebration for Laura, Audrey and Meghan was arranged by their colleagues to wish them well.

The medal haul was quite significant from our Special Olympians whose hard work and dedication paid off.



Laura Ahern

won the following medals

- **Gold medal** – Gymnastics Rope Routine
- **Silver medal** – Gymnastics Clubs Routine
- **Silver medal** – Gymnastics Ball Routine
- **Silver medal** – Gymnastics Ribbon Routine
- **Bronze medal** – All round performance



Audrey Galvin

won the following medal

- **Silver medal** – Basketball Team



Meghan O'Halloran

won the following medals

- **Silver medal** – Doubles Badminton
- **5th place medal** – Individual Badminton

Mercy Moments

Young Georgians

On a Saturday morning in late Spring, Mercy University Hospital welcomed the Young Georgian Society to the Mansion House, as part of their walking tour of Cork. The Mansion House has many particular features of Georgian Architecture, most notably the main entranceway, stairwell, the Drawing Room and Physiotherapy Department. The group received a brief presentation on the history of the building and stayed for some refreshments. The visit provided a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the history of this beautiful building.





Wedding Celebration at the Mercy Regional Rehabilitation Unit

When Mrs. Hannah O Leary was unable to attend the wedding of her granddaughter in Mount Juliet Estate, Hannah's family and friends were determined she wouldn't miss out and they made arrangements to spend the afternoon with her to watch the ceremony together.

The staff of St. Luke's Ward swung into action and assisted Hannah's family and friends in making it a memorable day. The fashion was second to none and the food and drinks could rival any 5-star hotel!

Welcome to the Mercy

The Nurse Practice Development Unit celebrated the successful completion of the adaptation programme, by 13 internationally educated nurses, with the Mercy "Good Cup of Tea". All are now awaiting their registration to come through via the NMBI.





People Hubs

The MUH People Hubs (formerly known as HR Hubs) have been expanded to reflect the broader interests of staff. These quarterly public forums will now include representation/information from Occupational Health, the Social Club, Greenway 57 and HR with occasional guest speakers, offering a space to:

- Learn about available supports and new initiatives
- Connect with colleagues and teams across the organisation
- Ask questions and get practical information

Green Buds Energy Awareness Day

Greenway57's Green Buds hosted an Energy Awareness Day on February 26th. The day focused on work and home efficiencies and how a small change can make a huge difference. Thanks to Niall Gibbons, Energy Officer, HSE South West for all his support, the MUH Technical Services Department for their input and Lynn Kettunen, Green Buds co-ordinator, for bringing it all together.





With Pride

Inclusion Health Clinical Nurse Specialist, Lisa Kelly, together with colleagues from across the hospital hosted a Pride Coffee Morning where representatives from Cork City Council and LINQ were on hand to provide information etc. for staff and patients alike.

Transition Year Programme (TY)

Mercy University Hospital (MUH) welcomed transition year (TY) students between January and March of this year. The TY programme is a three-day programme ran over three 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. Sincere thanks to all staff who helped with the delivery of this programme.





New Physiotherapy Uniforms

Physiotherapy staff recently switched to scrubs-style uniforms. After staff input on the design, blue uniforms with "Physiotherapy" text were chosen. This is in keeping with the traditional colour-associations of the profession and aids identification of staff roles on the wards.

The new uniforms will mostly be worn by ward-based physiotherapists. Traditional white tunic/blouse or white/navy t-shirt will be retained as an option. Physiotherapists working on interdisciplinary teams such as the Frailty Intervention Team will continue to wear the team's colour scrubs (burgundy).

Congratulations

MUH Employee Choice Values Award

Congratulations to the 16th recipient of the MUH Employee Choice Values Award (Peer to Peer) – Arlene Coughlan. Arlene, who works in the Patient Accounts Department was nominated under the Value of Compassion. In Mercy, Compassion calls us to foster an attitude of openness and sensitivity to the suffering of others and responding to them with tenderness and care.

"The kind word, the gentle compassionate and the patient hearing of sorrows – these cost the giver nothing" – Catherine McAuley (Mercy Foundress)

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



Arlene Coughlan receiving the MUH Employee Choice Values Award from Deputy CEO Brendan Doyle

CONGRATULATIONS

Fiona Dunican *(Department of Nursing – Discharge Co-ordinator)*	**Siobhán Forde** *(Department of Nursing – CNM2 Endoscopy/St. Oliver's)*	**Tara Hart** *(Administration – Outpatient Department)*	**Treasa Hurley** *(Radiographer – PACs)*
Majid Murtaza Noor *(Biomedical Engineer)*	**Ugonma Uba Nwankwo** *(Department of Nursing – CNM2 Emergency Department)*	**Holly O'Connor** *(Pharmacy)*	**Rosanne O'Donovan** *(Department of Nursing – CNM2 Emergency Department)*
Geraldine O'Leary *(Finance)*	**Angela Quinn** *(Catering)*	**Emergency Department Team**	

Life-time Achievement Award

Colleagues, friends and family gathered as Mercy University Hospital acknowledged Prof Micheal O'Riordain and Advanced Nurse Practitioner Kathleen Sugrue with the 2025 MUH Lifetime Achievement Award.

Micheal and Kathleen received the Award for their exemplary clinical leadership, dedication to excellence in patient care and respectively advancing the Department of Surgery and the Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) specialty.



L-R: Rebecca O'Donovan, MUH Director of Nursing, Kathleen Sugrue, ANP, Prof Micheál O'Riordain, Margaret McKiernan, CEO and Mr Paul Sweeney, Clinical Director (Peri-operative & Radiology)

Both were also acknowledged by CEO, Margaret McKiernan for their local, national and international renown in academia, not just for teaching and mentorship but for continuing to innovate and develop programmes that will set clinical standards for generations to come.

Warm congratulations were extended to Micheal and Kathleen who both embody the pioneering spirit of Mercy and continue to demonstrate a passion for serving the patients of MUH, always exceeding expectations and translating the Mercy Values into action.





Daisy Award – Department of Nursing

Congratulations to MUH Department of Nursing staff who have received the Daisy Award* for February, March and April 2026. This monthly Award is to celebrate and acknowledge extraordinary Nurses from nominations received from our patients and their loved ones.

February



March



April



**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.*

Pan seared Marinated Irish lamb Rump with Tabouleh Salad

Gary Costello, MUH Head Chef



Ingredients

For the lamb

- 4 lamb rumps
- 10 gr fresh mint
- Juice of 2 lemons
- Natural yogurt 2cups
- Honey 3tbls spoons
- 1 tsp of cumin

Marinate all together for 24-48 hours

For the Salad

- 250gr cous cous
- 2 Vine ripened tomatoes diced
- 1 red onion very finely diced
- 1/3 of a cucumber diced
- 15 gr fresh mint diced
- Olive oil 50ml
- Juice of 1 lemon +zest
- Juice of 1 lime
- Salt & pepper

Add all ingredients into a bowl and cover and leave for overnight.

Season the following day.

Preparation

Sear lamb on hot pan and finish in preheated oven at 170 degrees for 30mins.

Allow lamb to stand for 20 mins before slicing.

Serve with the salad along with a tablespoon of Crème fraîche.

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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