

Annual Review 2019



Seirbhís Sláinte
Níos Fearr
á Forbairt

Building a
Better Health
Service



Pictured are the Learning from Lives Ghana team at Shannon Airport, leaving for Ghana in June 2019. Back Row (l to r) Sheila Bowers, Dietitian Manager, UL Hospitals Group (ULHG); Mary Flahive, Senior Physiotherapist and Practice Tutor, UHL; Katie Sheehan, Assistant Director of Nursing, Croom Orthopaedic Hospital; Mary Hannon, Clinical Nurse Manager 2, UHL; Rachel Keyes, Neonatal Nurse, UMHL; Yvonne Young, Assistant Director of Nursing & Lead for Sepsis, ULHG; Rosalie Stack, Senior Physiotherapist, Croom Orthopaedic Hospital; Prof Roy Philip, Consultant Paediatrician & Neonatologist, UHL & University Maternity Hospital Limerick (UMHL). Front Row (l to r) Mr Frank Keane, Senior Fellow in Paramedic Studies at the University of Limerick Graduate Entry Medical School; Quintain Noonan, UL Paramedics student; Dr Joe Kelly, Emergency Medicine Consultant, University Hospital Limerick (UHL).

Front Cover: Pictured is Tipperary All Ireland hurling star Barry Heffernan with his grandmother Mary McLoughney and the Liam McCarthy Cup, at Nenagh Hospital.

Photo credits:

Alan Place Photography and Brian Arthur Photography.

All photography included in this publication was taken prior to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

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CEO & Chairman Overview

The announcement during 2019 of six integrated healthcare regions was a tantalising glimpse of what the future holds in terms of devolving more decision-making authority to the regions in planning and delivering services.

Slaintecare holds out great promise for our patients and for those working across the health service and we look forward to the regions being established in the near future. For now UL Hospitals Group remains focused on providing care to a catchment of some 473,000 people across the MidWest. We continue to operate as a single entity spread across six sites with an integrated management and clinical governance infrastructure.

Our vision remains unchanged and is always worth restating: “to be a valued, trusted and leading provider of excellence in healthcare which is patient-centred, clinically integrated, team-based and research-driven”.

During 2019, we continued to advance this vision across all fronts, in spite of the considerable challenges presented by growing demand and a constrained financial environment. An emphasis on converting agency staff to the payroll enabled us to take control of our budget and break even by year-end. This sustained effort locally was in keeping with a renewed national emphasis on improving the financial performance of the HSE.

ED presentations were marginally down in 2019, while our Injury Units saw a 2% increase in attendances and now account for one in three of all unscheduled presentations. In terms of scheduled care, both outpatient and inpatient/day case activity increased over the 12-month period.

According to the National Patient Experience Survey, four in every five of our patients described their hospital stay as good or very good. This is a tribute to the dedication of our staff and the quality of care. However, patient feedback is clear that one area where we must improve is around access and patient flow. We were therefore delighted to commence work on the 60-bed inpatient block during 2019 and we expect these beds to open by the end of 2020.

Through innovative ways of working, we have continued to increase our overall clinical activity in terms of its scope and quantity, and to hit crucial targets in quality and patient safety.

All of this has been achieved within the context of advancing our strategic plan and its four priorities of Clinical Transformation; Education, Research and Innovation; Collaboration and Alliances; and Digital Health.

In terms of **Clinical Transformation**, the Ophthalmology Centre at Nenagh Hospital achieved its target of 1,400 cataract procedures over the year. We expanded the robotic surgery programme at UHL to include gynaecology. Right across the Group, we saw examples of forward-thinking staff innovation with demonstrably positive impacts on patient experience. Examples include our advanced nurse practitioners undertaking the first implants for stroke/syncope patients in their profession and the appointment of our first midwife sonographer.

On **Education Research and Innovation**, we established the Health Sciences Academy with our community health and academic partners to formalise our commitment to improving patient care through medical research, education and clinical and community-based practice.

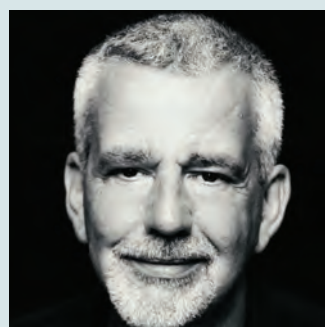
The Limerick Digital Innovation Forum initiated in 2019 is an example both of effective **Collaboration and Alliances** as well as our commitment to **Digital Health**. Through the Forum, we are working with other state bodies, with third level institutions and with industry leaders to drive improvements in the digital infrastructure across the MidWest to support various eHealth, education and many more initiatives.

A newly invigorated Patient Council was established during 2019 and we look forward to continuing to work effectively with it.

We want to thank everyone involved with UL Hospitals Group, including all our staff and volunteers, for their ongoing commitment, dedication and above all, providing excellent care, improving overall quality and patient experience.



Colette Cowan
CEO



Graham Knowles
Chairman

About UL Hospitals Group

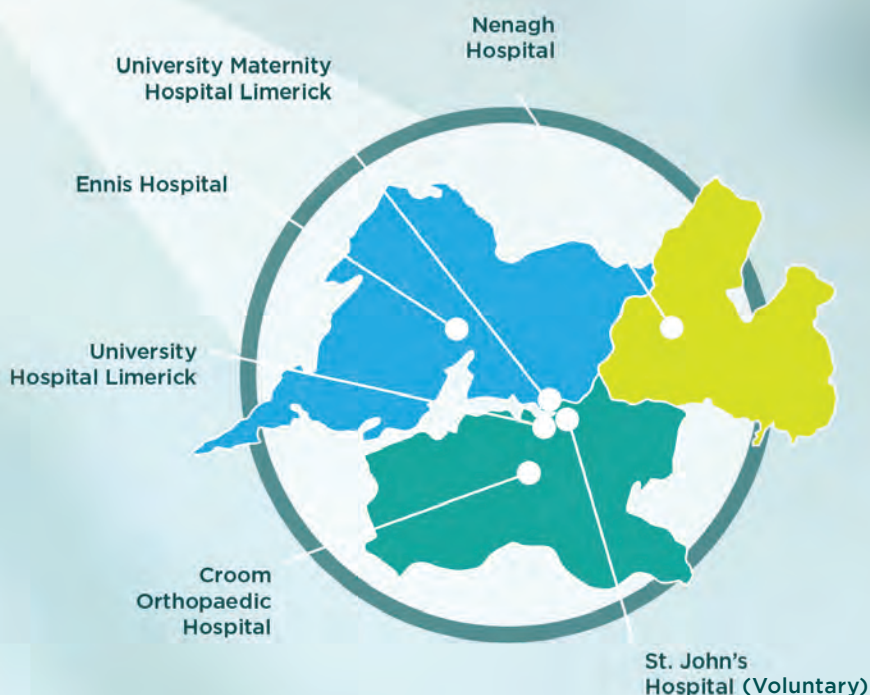
UL Hospitals Group comprises six different hospital sites in the Midwest of Ireland (Limerick, Clare and North Tipperary).

- University Hospital Limerick (UHL)
- University Maternity Hospital Limerick (UMHL)
- Nenagh Hospital
- Ennis Hospital
- Croom Orthopaedic Hospital
- St. John's Hospital (Voluntary)

Operating on a hub-and-spoke system, the centralised critical care facilities at UHL are supported by local Model 2 and Model 2S (Specialist) hospitals. We operate on this basis to achieve economies of scale, to allow for a more streamlined and specialised regional service, and to ensure people can still be treated as close to home as possible. Together, these hospitals deliver a range of crucial services and provide a robust, comprehensive healthcare network for our patients across the Midwest.



Our academic partner is the University of Limerick (UL). Our relationship with UL is important in improving standards of care, fostering education, clinical research and innovation.



What does UL Hospitals Group do?

UL Hospitals provides emergency, surgical and medical services on an inpatient and outpatient basis to a population of some 473,000 people in the Midwest of Ireland.

Our 4,100 strong staff are proud to serve our community, and we are committed to treating our patients with care, compassion and kindness.

UL Hospitals Group average daily activity in 2019

195

PATIENTS
TREATED
IN OUR ED

A FURTHER

104

IN OUR
INJURY UNITS

862

PATIENTS
SEEN IN
OUTPATIENT
CLINICS

205

PATIENTS
DISCHARGED

258

DAY
PROCEDURES

11

BABIES
DELIVERED

University Hospital Limerick (UHL)

UHL is the largest hospital in the Group, providing emergency and critical care to the region's patients, especially those who require more complex medical and surgical care.



UHL is one of just eight specialist cancer centres in the country.

UHL has a dedicated coronary centre treating patients for serious heart attacks, and a thrombolysis centre, providing vital care for acute stroke.



UHL provides cutting edge surgical and non-surgical healthcare services.



UHL has the only ED in the Midwest, caring for patients 24/7, 365 days a year.

Ennis, Nenagh and St. John's Hospitals

Ennis, Nenagh & St. John's provide:

Treatment for
minor injuries
(Injury Units)

Medical
Assessment
through GP
referral

Day
Surgery

St John's Hospital also cares for more complex surgical patients who require a short hospital stay.



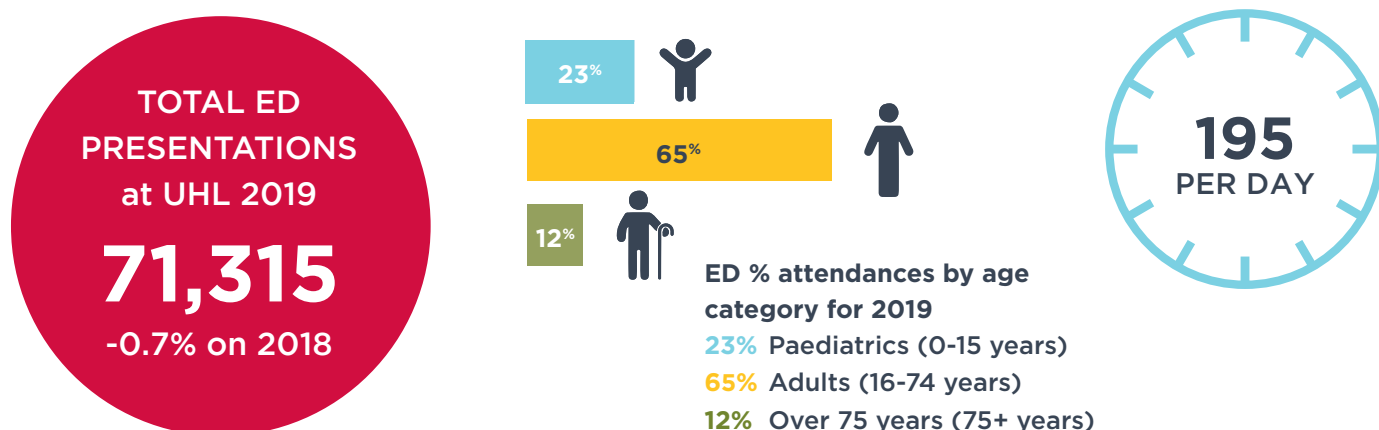
Specialist Maternity and Orthopaedic Services

The Group has two Specialist hospitals, one for maternity services (University Maternity Hospital Limerick) and the other for orthopaedic services (Croom Orthopaedic Hospital) both catering for specific needs in the community.

UL Hospitals Group: Our Year in Figures

Activity & Operational Performance for 2019

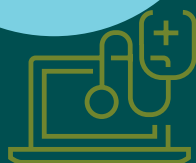
Emergency Department University Hospital Limerick (UHL)



Injury Unit

Injury Units presentations accounted for **31.7%** of all emergency presentations across the Group.

33,069
PRESENTATIONS
+2.5% on 2018



Readmission Rates

Medical



Emergency readmission rate for acute medical conditions, to the same hospital within 30 days of discharge. The 2019 national benchmark target was 11.1%. **ULHG came in under this target.**

10.1%

Surgical



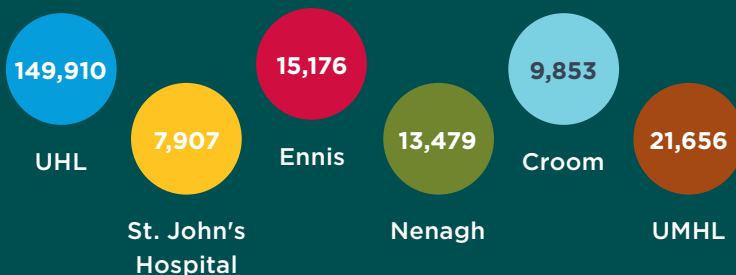
The Group's 2019 surgical readmission rate, to the same hospital within 30 days of discharge. The 2019 national benchmark target is 3%. **ULHG came in under this target.**

1.2%

Outpatient Attendances

Total of new and return outpatient attendances across all sites in 2019

217,981



Average Length of Stay (ALOS)

MEDICAL 5.3 Days

ULHG remained under the 2019 national benchmark target of **5.4 days** for medical ALOS.

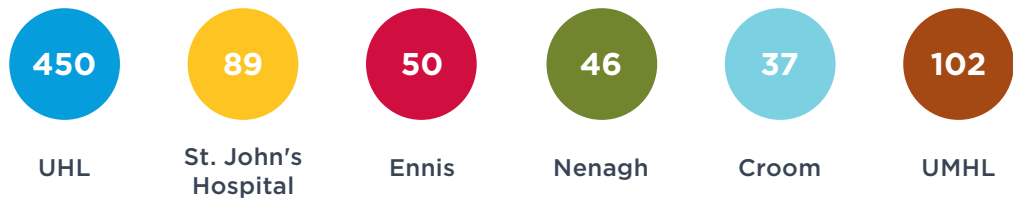
SURGICAL 4.5 Days

ULHG remained under the 2019 national benchmark target of **5.1 days** for surgical ALOS.

Facts & Figures

Hospital Beds

Inpatient Beds



Day Case Capacity



INPATIENT

is a patient who goes into hospital to receive medical or surgical care and stays there one or more nights while they are being treated.

A Day Case:

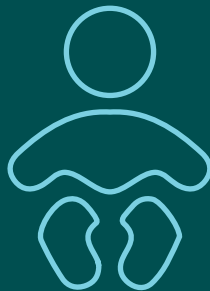
- Patient admitted on an elective basis
- No overnight stay
- Admitted and discharged on same day



Patient care that resulted in a birth/delivery is not included in the day case capacity figures.

Births

4,155
BIRTHS
4,441 in 2018



University Maternity Hospital Limerick is the busiest maternity hospital outside of Dublin and Cork.

Staff Numbers

ULHG is a substantial employer in the Midwest region employing approx

4,100
across 6 hospitals.

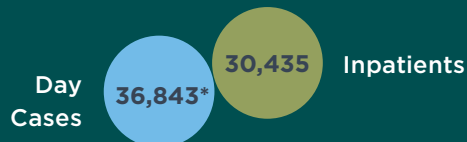


DOSA

Rate of elective surgical inpatients who had principal procedure conducted on day of admission was 90.5%. The 2019 national target rate was 81.7%.

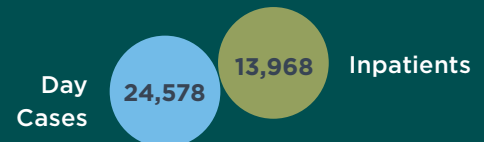
Inpatient & Day Cases

Medical

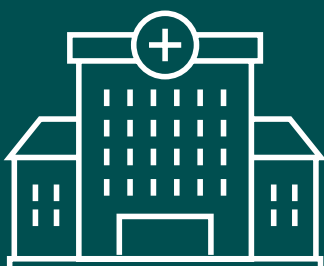


*This includes 16,389 dialysis cases

Surgical



Maternal & Child Health



2019 Annual Staff Recognition Awards

UL Hospitals Group celebrated the achievements of staff working in its services and across hospital sites at its fifth annual Staff Recognition Awards at a reception in The Strand Hotel.





1 Best Team: Cancer Clinical Trials Unit, University Hospital Limerick (UHL)

Pictured (l to r) Susan Nagle, Jo Earls, Marie Hanrahan, Ela Korona-Ansari and Maureen O'Grady, Cancer Clinical Trials Unit, UHL

2 Innovation in a Clinical Area: Nurse-led Implantable Cardiac Device Service, UHL

Pictured are (l to r) Colette Cowan, CEO, UL Hospitals Group (ULHG), Oliver O'Halloran, Candidate Advanced Nurse Practitioner (cANP); Rachel Larke, cANP; Nora Cunningham, cANP, Service Co-Lead; Deirdre Mullins, Portfolio Lead, ULHG Project Management Office; Sheila Ryan, cANP, Service Co-Lead; Caroline Byrne, Global Diagnostics Ireland & Global Vision; and Brian Carey, Assistant Director of Nursing, Dialysis, UHL.

3 Education and Training: Learning for Lives Ghana

Members of the UL Hospitals Group/UL Learning for Lives Ghana project team

Pictured (l to r) Mary Flahive, Senior Physiotherapist and Practice Tutor, UHL; Yvonne Young, Assistant Director of Nursing & Lead for Sepsis, ULHG; Rosalie Stack, Senior Physiotherapist, Croom Orthopaedic Hospital; Katie Sheehan, Assistant Director of Nursing, Croom Orthopaedic Hospital; Sheila Bowers, Dietitian Manager, ULHG; Mary Hannon, Clinical Nurse Manager 2, UHL; Dr Joe Kelly, Emergency Medicine Consultant, UHL; Eimear O'Donovan, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Infection Prevention & Control, ULHG; Rachel Keyes, Neonatal Nurse, University Maternity Hospital Limerick (UMHL); Prof Roy Philip, Consultant Paediatrician & Neonatologist, UHL & UMHL.

4 Quality Improvement: Eliminate Preventable HIE & 'I'm Safe'

The Eliminate Preventable HIE & 'I'm Safe' Project team at University Maternity Hospital Limerick (UMHL)

5 Innovation in a Non-clinical Area: Red2Green Project

ULHG CEO Colette Cowan (left), ULHG Head of Finance, John Cowhey (centre) and David Neville of awards sponsor Investnet (centre-right) with members of the Red2Green Project, (from left) Data Analyst, Frank Shortt; General Manager of Unscheduled Care, Paula Cussen Murphy (Project Lead); Dave Murray, ICT support; and Operational Director of Nursing, Ber Murphy

6 Best Research: OPTIMEND

Pictured (l to r) Emergency Medicine Consultant, Dr Damien Ryan; Senior Occupational Therapist Íde O'Shaughnessy; Principal Investigator and Senior Lecturer in physiotherapy, UL, Dr Rose Galvin; ULHG Head of Strategy, Suzanne Dunne; OPTIMEND line manager Fiona Steed; senior physiotherapist Stephen White; and Mark Kerins from award sponsors Novartis

7 Best Patient Experience Award: Margaret O'Sullivan, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Symptomatic Breast Unit, UHL

Margaret celebrates with Alan O'Gorman Assistant Director of Nursing, Perioperative Directorate

8 Unsung Hero: Katie Sheehan Croom Orthopaedic Hospital

Katie Sheehan (centre), Operational Assistant Director of Nursing at Croom Orthopaedic Hospital, Unsung Hero award winner pictured with (left) Colette Cowan, CEO of ULHG, and (right) Maria Godley, Regional Manager South, Alliance Medical

9 Patient Council Award: Miriam McCarthy and Catherine Hand, Patient Advocacy Liaison (PALS) UHL

John Hannafin, Chairman of the UL Hospitals Group Patient Council, with Group CEO Colette Cowan (left), present the Patient Council Award to Miriam McCarthy (right) and Catherine Hand (not pictured) for their work in patient advocacy and co-founding the Patient Council in 2016



"It's fantastic to have this state-of-art-platform for for better patient outcomes. Patients who have a hysterectomy via the robotic procedure have reduced blood loss, less post-operative pain, reduced length of hospital stay by four days and a quicker return to normal activities than patients having any other methods of surgery", said Ms Mahmood.

Pictured (l to r) Maura Tully, CNM2; Ms Uzma Mahmood, Lead Robotic Gynaecologist; and Roland Pika, Staff Nurse

Robotic Gynaecological Procedures at University Hospital Limerick (UHL)

Women's health in the Midwest advanced further in January 2019 with the expansion of the robotic surgery programme at UHL to include gynaecological procedures. Consultant Obstetrician/Gynaecologist Ms Uzma Mahmood performed the first such procedure using the Da Vinci Xi Dual Console robot. Da Vinci provides gynaecological surgeons with a ground breaking alternative to both traditional open surgery and conventional laparoscopy.



Pictured (l to r) Caoimhe Gilmore, Physiotherapist, Nenagh Hospital; Paula Ryan, Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Respiratory, UL Hospitals Group; Carmel McInerney, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Respiratory, Ennis Hospital; and Olivia Quinn, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Respiratory, Nenagh Hospital

Carmel and Paula run the clinic in Ennis.

New Clinic for Pulmonary Fibrosis Patients at Ennis Hospital

Service for patients with chronic respiratory conditions continue to expand at Ennis Hospital with a new monthly clinic for patients with Interstitial Lung Disease (ILD)/Pulmonary Fibrosis.

The new nurse-led service facilitates patients with this serious and debilitating condition and avoids the inconvenience of a long journey to UHL or another major centre.

There is also an ILD clinic in Nenagh Hospital. The clinic comes under the clinical governance of Dr Brian Casserly and Dr Aidan, O'Brien, respiratory consultants.

#Thankyoulaura

World Cancer Day 2019

To mark World Cancer Day in 2019, Ennis woman, the late Laura Brennan fronted a European campaign to encourage parents to get the facts and vaccinate their children against HPV. Laura was diagnosed with terminal cervical cancer in 2017 and sadly passed away in March 2019. She had worked with the HSE to advocate for the vaccine. For more on the HPV vaccine, please visit www.hpv.ie

New Information Governance Team at UL Hospitals

The Information Governance Office was set up to process all non-personal Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and to facilitate GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)

compliance across the UL Hospitals Group. The key ways in which they do this are:

- Awareness Sessions
- GDPR training on HSE land
- Advice Clinics
- Regular Top Tips

Contact the IGO team at igo.ulhg@hse.ie.



Pictured (l to r) Annette Ridley, Information Governance Manager, Angela Maher, GDPR Officer and Maria Keogh, FOI Officer, IGO Office



Pictured (l to r) Paul Griffin ICT, Dave Murray, ICT, Niamh O'Grady, Operational Services Directorate, Tony McBride, Maintenance, Paul Hayes, Catriona Mulcahy, Annette McInerney, Margo McInerney, Reception, Larry Murphy, Maintenance, Linda Fahy, Operational Services Directorate, Kevin O'Mahoney & Niall Joyce, Maintenance

New Reception Area at UHL

The construction and development of a new reception area at UHL began early in 2019, providing a bright, modern and welcoming area for our patients visitors and staff.



Pictured (l to r) Kris Kumar and Kathleen Delaney from Acute Medical Assessment Unit, University Hospital Limerick

UL Hospitals Group Multicultural Celebration Day

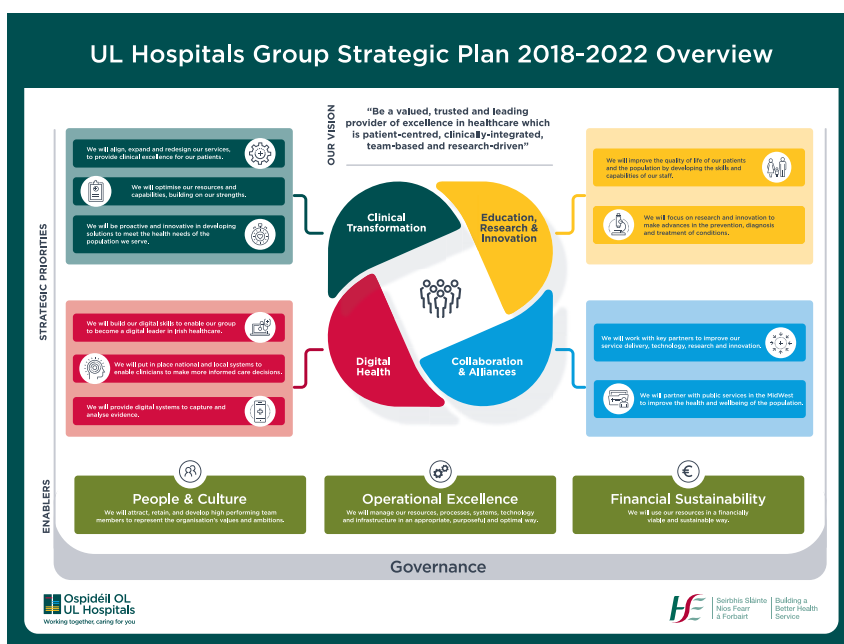
UL Hospitals Group held its second annual Multicultural Celebration Day at University Hospital Limerick (UHL) on the 25th of March. Colourful stands and displays, organised by staff working in UHL, lined the corridor of the Clinical Education and Research Centre in UHL. There were stands from India, Pakistan, Brazil, Sudan, Ireland, Greece, Philippines, Spain and Poland. Staff on the stands wore their own national dress, brought in foods to sample and had displays on their stands showing what is unique to the culture in each of their countries. Events were also held in Nenagh Hospital and University Maternity Hospital Limerick.

Strategy into Action Workshop

47 people across various disciplines at UL Hospitals Group attended a "Strategy into Action" Workshop.

A detailed implementation plan was developed at the workshop for the four Strategic Priorities contained within the UL Hospitals Group 5 year strategic plan launched in 2018. The pillars are; Clinical Transformation, Education Research & Innovation, Collaboration & Alliances and Digital Health.

An Executive Sponsor was also appointed to each strategic priority as well as Project Leads for individual projects with the ULHG Project Management Office monitoring developments.



Strategy Boards were displayed across all sites during 2019

"The ability to bring a smile to a young person's face is a powerful thing, especially when they are unwell" Ronan O'Mahony

Henry Shine O'Meara age 11 pictured with Ronan O Mahony and Joy Neville, Children's Ark Ambassadors

Rugby Heroes Joy Neville and Ronan O'Mahony named as Ark Ambassadors

International rugby referee Joy Neville and Munster Rugby's Ronan O'Mahony were named ambassadors for the Children's Ark at University Hospital Limerick (UHL) in April. For children living with or recovering from illness, a visit from their sporting heroes is always a sure way of taking their minds off hospital and treatment plans. Young patients in UHL are delighted they will now be seeing more of Joy and Ronan in their roles as ambassadors.

Limerick Cancer Nurse wins Sheila Clarke Bursary

Limerick cancer nurse Brid Casey's work with survivors in the Midwest earned her a travel and education bursary worth €2,000.

The Sheila Clarke Bursary is awarded to a staff nurse caring for cancer patients in memory of the late Sheila Clarke, a past president of the Irish Association of Nurses in Oncology (IANO) and a pioneer in the development of cancer nursing as a specialty in Ireland.

Brid, from Patrickswell, County Limerick, works on the inpatient ward 4B and also acts as a mentor for student and junior nurses on the inpatient ward, the day ward and outpatient clinics.



Brid Casey, winner of the Sheila Clarke Bursary

"Both the Chief Clinical Information Officer, Dr Naro Imcha, and I recognise the importance of clinical engagement in driving forward digital health to improve patient care. Healthcare is on the edge of a digital revolution through robotics, machine learning and artificial intelligence, and the energy and enthusiasm demonstrated by our colleagues in organising this event shows us the future is bright in UL Hospitals," Brian McKeon, Group Director of Informatics, Planning and Performance, UL Hospitals Group.

Dr Conor Keogh Academic NCHD, UHL and Brian McKeon, Brian McKeon, Group Director of Informatics, Planning and Performance, UL Hospitals Group.

FutureMed Festival Explores Technology in Healthcare

Organised by NCHDs Dr Sam Gray, Dr Conor Keogh and Dr Salim Sebaoui, FutureMed (8-11 May), was a multi-disciplinary event held in Limerick which aimed to raise awareness of the possibilities of digital technologies and how they can be used to solve real clinical problems. At a hackathon style event on the final day, problems identified by clinicians were selected and presented to collaborative teams of clinicians, designers and engineers under the guidance of senior mentors, and solutions rapidly developed and prototyped. Solutions were then pitched to the event judges.

Values in Action Champion nominated as Unsung Hero



Ann O'Reilly
Values in Action
Champion

Ann O'Reilly was a worthy nominee for Unsung Hero at the ULHG Staff Recognition Awards in 2019. Ann has provided remarkable service to the HSE since starting in the organisation as a Healthcare Assistant in 1987. In 2001 Ann transitioned to the role of ward clerk, bringing with her a wealth of bedside experience and her fabulous manner.

In 2016 Ann, Ward Clerk on Ward 3B UHL, was nominated by her colleagues as a Values in Action Champion, having identified her as somebody they turn to for support and guidance in the workplace.



Ann willingly and actively participates in the Values in Action programme and has commenced many initiatives as a result.

Pictured (l to r) John Hannafin, -Chairman Patients Council, Deirdre King DeMontano, UL Hospitals Group (ULHG) Chief Clinical Directors Office, Suzanne Dunne, Head of Strategy, Dr Naro Imcha, Chairperson Quality Improvement Committee, Margret Gleeson, Chief Director Nursing and Midwifery and Gary O'Hanlon, patient.



Quality Improvement (QI) Projects Driving Patient Safety and Improving Outcomes at UL Hospitals Group

Dr Philip Crowley, National Director, Quality Improvement Division, HSE delivered an overview of quality improvement in Ireland and commended the work being done in the Midwest at the second annual UL Hospitals Group Clinical Audit and Quality Improvement Conference at University Hospital Limerick in June. Dr Crowley said it was indisputable that improved healthcare was a significant factor in the increasing longevity of the Irish population. There were 33 speakers at the two-day conference, in addition to 93 poster presentations. The 200 plus attendees included healthcare professionals, health managers, academics and patients.

First Midwife Sonographer in UMHL

Anna Gleeson is the first midwife-sonographer to practise at University Maternity Hospital Limerick (UMHL).

Healthcare professionals providing antenatal ultrasounds have traditionally come from a radiography background but a shortage of sonographers nationally has seen practitioners start to enter through the midwifery route.

Ms Gleeson has 30 years' experience as a midwife and has recently obtained and MSc in Ultrasonography from University College Dublin. Her qualification is a positive development for women accessing maternity care in the MidWest. Anna was supported in her training and supervised by radiographer colleagues in UMHL and the Department of Radiology at University Hospital Limerick.



Pictured is Shineen Hoyne from Kilfinane, County Limerick, on her antenatal visit with Anna Gleeson, midwife sonographer, at University Maternity Hospital Limerick

"Humanitarian volunteering is a key part of the Group's strategy, establishing links with the developing world in a sustainable, targeted and meaningful way. The project in Ghana realises this key strategic objective and we are very proud of the team's achievements," Noreen Spillane, Chief Operations Officer of UL Hospitals Group.



The Learning for Lives Ghana team with just some of the local cohort of Trainers and Super Trainers in Wa, Upper West Ghana.

Crucial life-saving skills training mission in Ghana

In July Learning for Lives Ghana (Lfl Ghana) completed its three-year plan to establish a programme of emergency care skills training for healthcare workers in Ghana. Lfl Ghana is a collaboration between ULHG, UL Graduate Entry Medical School (GEMS) and UL Paramedic Studies in partnership with the national health service of Ghana. Lfl Ghana has provided 240 Community-based Health Planning & Services (CHPS) workers with basic life-saving skills, and delivered specialist instruction in hand hygiene, sepsis, physiotherapy, nutrition and neonatal care, both in the community and to hospital staff.

Four-Year Nursing and Midwifery Strategy launched

Nurses and midwives will be at the heart of delivering the changes in healthcare set out in the government's Slaintecare programme.

A framework for how these changes will be introduced by these essential staff is set out in *Professional Excellence: UL Hospital Group Nursing & Midwifery Strategic Plan 2019-2022* launched in July. The four-year plan is founded upon five key priorities: Quality Relationship-Based Care; Leadership at All Levels; Workforce Capacity; Collaboration, Alliances and Innovation; and Professional Practice.



Pictured back row (l to r) Cora Lunn, Director Leadership and Organisational Development (Nursing and Midwifery); Margaret Quigley, Director of Midwifery; Patricia O'Gorman, Operational Director of Nursing, Ennis Hospital; John Hannafin, Chairman, Patient Council; Ber Murphy, Operational Director of Nursing, UHL; Declan McNamara, Director of Nursing, Perioperative; Cathrina Ryan, Operational Director of Nursing, Nenagh Hospital; seated, (l to r), Margaret Finn, Director of Nursing, St John's Hospital; Margaret Gleeson, Chief Director of Nursing and Midwifery; and Mairead Cowan, Director of Nursing, Medicine



Sorcha Kelly age 16 from Birdhill Tipperary meets Love Island Winner Greg O'Shea.

Greg O'Shea visits the Children's Ark at University Hospital Limerick (UHL)

Patients and staff were delighted to meet Love Island winner, Limerick's own Greg O'Shea, at the Children's Ark, UHL in August. Kind-hearted Greg made the paediatric unit one of his first stops when he flew home to Shannon after winning the biggest reality show on TV.

Refurbished MAU at Nenagh Hospital

The relocated Medical Assessment Unit (MAU) at Nenagh Hospital has made a dramatic positive impact on service to patients and workflow for staff, enabling more efficient throughput of patients as well as a safer and more accessible care environment for all.

The MAU is a sleek, modern facility now on the ground floor, located within close access to all necessary diagnostics that may be required by patients assessed in the unit.

MAUs facilitate assessment, diagnosis and treatment of patients with medical conditions such as chest infections, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), pneumonia, urinary tract infections, fainting episodes, clots in the leg, anaemia and non-acute cardiac problems.



Pictured (l to r): Noreen Hough, Assistant Director of Nursing, Nenagh Hospital; Staff Nurse Majella Bourke; Staff Nurse Aine Gleeson; Staff Nurse Patricia Bourke; CNM1 Mairead King; Dr Zaid Rana; Dr Maeve Maguire; and CNM2 Catherine Quinn.

The units are for patients who do not require admission, but need assessment, investigation and a treatment plan, and, in some cases, a follow-up review after a few days.

September

al, Nenagh

ortuithe le haghaidh
8.00 a.m. go 8.00 p.m.
nair atá 5 bliana d'aois
s sinne.

í Máithreachais téigh
eachais na hOllscoile,
led' thoil.

Péidiatraiceach (páisti)
igeandála, Ospidéal na
neach led' thoil.
igh 999/112 led' thoil.

for minor injuries from
n. 7 days per week
ears and over.

ernity services plea
Hospital, Limerick.

ult or Paediatric

o to the Emerg

y Hospital, Li

ase ring 99

racha

idéil O
Hospital

"There is the greatest respect for staff in PALS, we hear that from the patients every single day." Virginia O'Dowd

Nenagh Hospital Patient Advocacy Liaison Service (PALS) Volunteers, Polly Ryan (left), Toomevara resident and befriender on the PALS volunteer team at Nenagh Hospital, and Virginia O'Dowd (right), a retired school teacher and former public representative who was once Town Mayor of Nenagh.



Nenagh PALS volunteers a shining example of patient advocacy in UL Hospitals

Patient Advocacy Liaison Services (PALS) have been a crucial element of the UL Hospitals Group strategy to continually improve care standards and the patient experience across University Hospital Limerick, Ennis and Nenagh Hospitals. PALS volunteers are the public face of the service, dressed in red tabards with an embroidered yellow logo, they have had a transformative impact on patient experience in our hospitals, whether as way-finders, patient companions, information guides, or gatherers of anecdotal patient feedback.

RESIST: New campaign to Reduce Infection and Antimicrobial Resistance

A new hand hygiene programme was introduced across UL Hospitals Group as part of a wider national campaign aimed at reducing antimicrobial resistance and infection in hospitals and healthcare environments.

RESIST is the new identity for a number of initiatives under the HSE Antimicrobial Resistance and Infection Control programme (AMRIC), including a National Hand Hygiene Train the Trainer Programme. UL Hospitals was the first Hospital Group to move forward with full implementation of the programme following a successful pilot. The Group has been providing training and support for hand hygiene for many years.

RESIST is about a fresh approach to hand hygiene training to hospital staff, including greater involvement of hospital staff, patients and visitors



Pictured (l to r): At the launch of the RESIST Campaign at UHL were Barbara Slevin, Assistant Director of Nursing for Infection Prevention & Control and CPE Management; John Hannafin, Chairman, Patients Council; and Deirdre King de Montano, General Manager, Office of the Chief Clinical Director



Pictured (l to r): Prof Martin Cormican, National Clinical Lead for Antimicrobial Resistance; Colette Cowan, CEO, UL Hospitals Group, and Noreen Spillane, Chief Operations Officer, UL Hospitals Group.

Pictured (l to r) Margret Carroll, Peer Vaccinator, Margret Quigley, Executive Lead, Flu Campaign, Dr Paddy Quinn, NCHD, Mairead Lane Ryan, Occupational Health Nurse and Dr Sharmini Rathakrishnan, NCHD



Annual Flu Vaccination Campaign for Staff

October saw the launch of the annual Flu Vaccination Campaign for our staff. The staff vaccination drive coincided with the launch of the HSE's national flu campaign when all the at-risk groups are encouraged to get the vaccine, which is available free of charge from their GP or pharmacist. Healthcare workers are a crucial part of the picture in protecting patients and the population at large against flu. Occupational health clinics organised across the Midwest, helped to maximise vaccine uptake among health workers. These were augmented through the work of peer vaccinators appointed in every workplace to ensure as many colleagues as possible were given the opportunity to get the flu shot during 2019/2020 flu season.

Diagnostic Imaging Department of the Year 2019, Ennis Hospital Radiology Department

The Radiology Department at Ennis Hospital, was honoured as the Medray/IIRRT Diagnostic Imaging Department of the Year 2019 after a public vote.

The awards, run by Medray Imaging Systems with the Irish Institute of Radiography and Radiation Therapy (IIRRT), are a showcase for high standards in service professionalism.

Decided through a month-long process of nomination, shortlisting and a public vote, they also honour individuals and departments that go the extra mile to offer comfort and exceptional services to patients.



Celebrations at the Radiology Department in Ennis Hospital: Pictured (l to r) Beatrice Kerins, Radiographer; Siobhan Tuttle, Clerical; Shauna Moylan, Radiographer; Helen Finucane, Radiography Services Manager; Mairead Rouine; and Lydia Chaila, Radiographer.



The first baby home as part of the new service was beautiful baby Cadence, born on October 10th . Pictured (l to r) Helen Coe, Clinical Midwife Manager; baby Cadence Fitzgerald with parents Kelly Doheny and Alan Fitzgerald, and Nicola Molloy, Staff Midwife

New Early Transfer Home Service at University Maternity Hospital Limerick (UMHL)

The new Early Transfer Home Service at UMHL is designed for well mothers who have a healthy full term baby, who live within a defined catchment area and who want to return home early to receive postnatal care at home with the community midwifery team. After a mother has had her baby, and if all is normal and well, she can go home within approximately 12-24 hours. Mothers who have had an uncomplicated caesarean section can go home after 72 hours .The community midwife will call at home the next day and plan subsequent visits with the mother. There will be approximately 3-5 visits in total, with the midwife handing over care to the public health nurse after a week to 10 days after the birth.



Advanced Nurse Practitioners record a world-first for stroke and syncope patients

Two advanced nurse practitioners (ANPs) at University Hospital Limerick (UHL) became the world's first nursing team to carry out the surgical implant of a tiny monitor enabling stroke or syncope (sudden temporary loss of consciousness) patients to have their heart rate and rhythm monitored from their own homes.

The UHL ANP Older Person team of Nora Cunningham and Sheila Ryan are among the first nurses qualified to conduct the procedure, which previously had to be performed by cardiologists. Nora and Sheila have spent most of the past two years researching and training, after they proposed that a nurse-led service could relieve pressures on cardiologists in the hospital's busy cardiology department and significantly reduce wait times for patients in need of the implant.

Pictured (l to r) ANPs Nora Cunningham and Sheila Ryan pictured after completion of their first loop recorder implantation procedure at UHL in mid-November



Pictured (l to r) Dr. Eoin Noctor, Consultant Endocrinologist, UL Hospitals Group (ULHG), Miriam McCarthy, Manager HSA, Prof. Rachel Msetfi, Dean Education & Health Sciences, UL, Ms. Colette Cowan, CEO UL Hospitals Group, Mr Jim Daly TD, Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People, Prof. Paul Burke, CAO, ULHG and Vice Dean Education & Health Sciences UL, Ms. Maria Bridgeman, Chief Officer, MidWest Community Healthcare, Dr. Rose Galvin, HRI, UL.

Launch of the Health Sciences Academy (HSA) and opening of the Clinical Education & Research Centre (CERC)

Jim Daly Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People, cut the ribbon on the CERC, and officially launched the HSA in December. The HSA is a partnership between UL Hospitals Group (ULHG), University of Limerick (UL), and HSE Mid-West Community Healthcare which aims to become a global standard-bearer for improving patient care through medical research, education and clinical and community-based practice. The CERC, is a €12.75m facility developed in partnership between ULHG and UL, and co-funded by the HSE and UL. It supports the educational, training and research needs of the ULHG medical community, and the UL Graduate Entry Medical School (GEMS).

Staff Charity €5K Santa Dash

Staff at Croom Orthopaedic Hospital and UHL organised €5K Santa Dashes in aid of UL Hospitals Group Charity Limerick Suicide Watch. Promoting exercise in the workplace is part of a commitment by ULHG to health and wellbeing as set out in the Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2016-2019.



Santa Dash at Croom Orthopaedic Hospital



Pictured (l to r) Kris Buckley, Senior Play Specialist, Emma Hogan, Bonnie's handler, and young patients Isaac O'Meara, Adare, Co Limerick; Kimberly Burke, Kilbaha, Co Clare; and Sinead Hennessey, Clarecastle, Co Clare and Bonnie the dog.

Bonnie visits Children's Ark

Eight-year-old labrador Bonnie is a therapy dog and has been a regular visitor to the Children's Ark at UHL for the past two years, playing with young inpatients and day patients, and generally brightening the day for all.

Patient Feedback

Over 1,000 patients across the Midwest provided detailed feedback on their experience in hospital which is driving improvements in quality. Within UL Hospitals Group, in the third National Patient Experience Survey (NPES) 80% of patients rated their overall experience as good or very good, compared to a national average of 84%. Highlights included:

- **Croom Orthopaedic Hospital: 100%** of respondents said they were always treated with respect and dignity while in the hospital.
- **Nenagh Hospital:** Almost **100%** of patients described their ward/room as clean or very clean.
- **Ennis Hospital: 95%** of patients said they were always given enough privacy on the wards.
- **St. John's Hospital: 92.4%** of patients surveyed said that they always had confidence in the staff treating them.

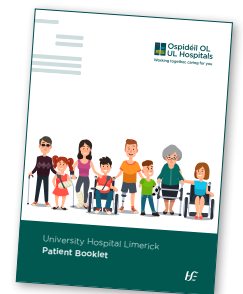
Feedback a driver for quality improvement:

New patient menus were launched at UHL providing greater choice and nutritional care for patients with an Improved Range of Therapeutic Diets and Texture-Modified Meals

In 2019 our patient booklet, produced in conjunction with staff and patients, was made available to all admitted patients.



Pictured (l to r) Pawel Chrzam, Chef; Joan Costelloe, Catering Attendant; Saji Pulimalayil, Chef and Michelle O'Halloran, Catering Attendant, UHL launching the new menus.



Patient Booklet

Patient Council

A strong voice for patients in planning and delivering acute hospital services in the Midwest is the key objective of the new Patient Council at UL Hospitals Group.

The Patient Council was established to enable patients and their relatives become active partners in UL Hospitals Group. And following a call for expressions of interest, five new members of the public joined the newly constituted Patient Council during 2019.

The Council advises the Hospital Group on ways to improve services and the hospital experience for patients and families who use any of its six hospitals. It provides a strong independent voice for patients, service users and their families. It comprises 11 members of the public and eight UL Hospitals Group staff.

Members of the Council are already making a contribution in improving services through their involvement in various committees and projects within UL Hospitals Group. This has included work on planning the new Emergency Department in UHL and the 60-bed inpatient block that is currently under construction. Members of the Council are actively involved in various committees including end-of-life care, nutrition and hydration, directional signage/wayfinding, patient flow and on developing improvement plans in response to the findings of the National Patient Experience Survey.



Members of the UL Hospitals Group Patient Council:

Back row (l to r) Mike Dwane, Communications Officer, Marina Rankin, Business Manager, Diagnostics Directorate, Michael Ryan, Public Member, Declan McNamara, Director of Nursing, Perioperative Directorate, Dr Gerry Burke, Chief Clinical Director (Interim), Kaoife McElligott, Chief Director of Nursing & Midwifery Office, Jill Franz, Public Member

Centre (l to r) Dr Nuala O'Connell, Consultant Microbiologist, Catherine English, Public Member, Miriam McCarthy, Patient Advocacy and Liaison Services Manager

Front row (l to r) Kay Caball, Public Member, Melody Buckley, Public Member, Margaret Gleeson (vice-chair), Chief Director of Nursing and Midwifery, John Hannafin (chair), Public Member, Judy Ryan, Public Member, Tammy Meaney, Public Member

The Council has a formal reporting relationship to the Quality Improvement Committee within UL Hospitals Group.



Some compliments from our patients in 2019

During my stay at your hospital, the love, care, good humour and kindness we received was second to none.

Your staff have incredible humanity and devotion to their work.

I can't speak highly enough of the Sunshine Unit, the paediatricians, dietitian, nurses and staff, I thank everyone there for their kindness and help.

My father received attentive, timely, compassionate care from all the people we encountered.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all the staff at Limerick Maternity Hospital. From start to end the staff were exceptional.

The professionalism and patient care was excellent at all times.

