



## Dear Colleagues

Welcome to the summer edition of Connect our quarterly magazine for GPs and healthcare staff in the community.

This summer our hospital and staff have celebrated a notable milestone celebrating our 25th anniversary opening in Tallaght. As an organisation we have faced many challenges over the years and I have no doubt we will face more in the future, but what I do know is that we are looking forward to the role we will play in the healthcare of our community in the next 25 years.

I think this is very well demonstrated in this edition of Connect as we showcase new services / procedures that we have developed for patients. Delivering more and more care in the community and reducing the length of stay for patients in hospital where it is within our ability to do so.

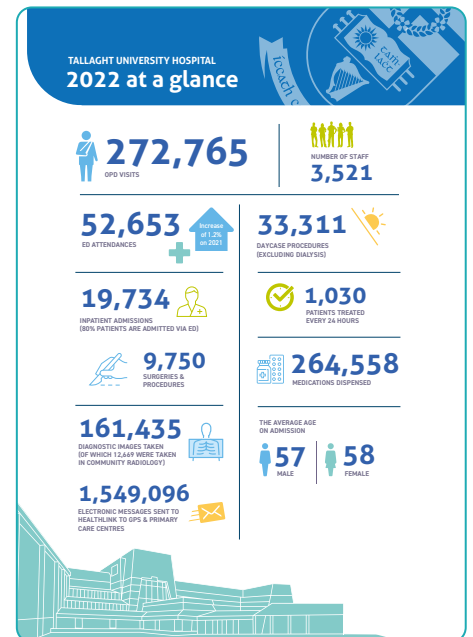
We are also at the initial stages of a modernisation of our outpatient services, this will benefit our patients, you the GP community and hospital staff. The project is at a very initial stage but we will be in a position to provide a more detailed update in the winter edition of Connect.

I am delighted to showcase the Annual Report for 2022 which shows a significant reduction in waiting times for daycase procedures. In the last year there was an 82% reduction in the number of patients waiting longer than 12 months for a daycase procedure. There was one particular waiting list that fell from 262 in January 2022 to 48 in December 2022. This was primarily as a result of the Hospital opening the Reeves Day Surgery Centre.

The TUH day surgery model has proven so successful the Government have announced plans to replicate it, at other hospitals around the country.

Here are some key findings in relation to the activity levels in 2022

- ▶ Overall admission to the Hospital through the ED was up 6% (an additional 851 patients)
- ▶ Admissions of patients presenting to the ED over the age of 75 was up by 19%
- ▶ The number of patients medically fit for discharge but awaiting a bed in a suitable community facility or waiting on a home care package ranged from 40–63 patients throughout 2022. This was predominantly a result of ongoing challenges in the community in relation to resourcing homecare packages



- ▶ 272,869 patients attended an outpatient appointment in 2022, up 8% from 2019 activity.

I hope you enjoy what's left of the summer.

Best wishes

**Lucy Nugent**  
Chief Executive of TUH

## Return of Pump Technology

Our Diabetes team have successfully restarted putting Type 1 Diabetes patients on insulin pump therapy.

The service has over 260 patient's using pump technology with seven new patients starting in the last few weeks. Before patients started using pumps they would have to take multiple daily injections, the pump offers an improved quality of life and better glycaemic control.



Pictured from left to right Mary Finn, Diabetes Dietitian; Breda Morris, CNS Diabetes; Celine Kenna, CNS Diabetes; Mary Horan, Diabetes Dietitian, patients Colm O Leary, Rasita Kalvaityte and Suzanne O' Malley pictured with Áine Fitzgerald, Medtronic Representative

## New treatment option for prostate surgery introduced at TUH

One in four men over the age of 40 in Ireland will suffer from an enlarged prostate gland.

In medical terms this is referred to as Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH). Recently, a team led by Consultant Urologist Professor Rustom Manecksha carried out a new type of minimally invasive procedure treating BPH in the Reeves Day Surgery Centre at TUH.

The innovative treatment (Rezūm) uses water vapour therapy to target and shrink the excess prostate tissue. When the steam contacts the prostate tissue the stored energy is released into the tissue. In time the body absorbs the treated tissue, reducing the size of the prostate. This relieves the urinary obstruction and improves urinary flow.

During the procedure, a specialised device is directed to deliver small bursts of heated water vapour directly into the prostate tissue. The treated tissue is then gradually reabsorbed by the body, reducing the size of the prostate and easing the symptoms for the patient. It is typically performed as a day procedure, using sedation or a short general anaesthetic.

It is a new and alternative treatment option, which adds to the options already offered, including UroLift, which the Urology team in TUH introduced in [2019](#).



*Pictured from left to right the team that carried out the first Rezūm procedures in the Reeves Day Surgery Centre were Mr. Diarmuid Sugrue, Urology SpR; Professor Rustom Manecksha, Urology Consultant; Shirley Hopton, CNM1; Kyle Garma, Staff Nurse and Elaine Borromeo, Staff Nurse*

## Unique Long Covid Resource Available

With the support of the Adelaide Health Foundation a new self-help video has been launched for people living with Long Covid.

The free online resource contains guidance on how patients can cultivate psychological flexibility to support them in living meaningfully, even in the presence of ongoing symptoms. Dr. Melanie Ryberg, Principal Specialist Clinical Psychologist at TUH, Dr. Ray Owen, a Consultant Clinical Psychologist & Health Psychologist from the UK and Dr. Susan O'Flanagan, Principal Specialist Clinical Psychologist, come together to talk about Psychological Flexibility and what it might offer those living with Long Covid.

Dr. Ryberg and Dr. O'Flanagan have both worked as part of dedicated services supporting patients with Long Covid over the past two to three years, while Dr. Owen has years of experience bringing this therapeutic approach to people living with other physical health conditions.



*Pictured at the launch of the new virtual self-help resource are from left to right Dr. Natalie Cole, Head of Innovation; Dr. Melanie Ryberg, Principal Specialist Clinical Psychologist and Niamh Gavin, Chief Executive of the Adelaide Health Foundation*

The concept of Psychological Flexibility is drawn from a therapeutic approach - Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) - that has proven benefits for those living with a range of different physical and mental health conditions. You can access a copy of the resource via this [link](#). Please feel free to reference the resource to your patients that might benefit.



## Headache Service Wins Award

The new pathway to optimise the management of headache patients attending ED/AMU and avoid hospital admission was led by Dr. Petya Bogdanova-Mihaylova, Consultant Neurologist. Support from the Neurology, Emergency and Radiology Departments, Acute Medical Unit, Operations and Innovation Team was critical to the success of the initiative.

The project had been awarded €25,000 to support a pilot from the competitive Spark Hospital Innovation Fund. This project aimed to reduce hospital admission by providing a safe alternative pathway for patients presenting to ED/AMU with a chief complaint of headache (urgent secondary headaches excluded), with expedited outpatient MRI brain and rapid access Neurology outpatient review, thus reducing inpatient stays and improving specialist access for this cohort of patients.

Over eight months, from Sept 2022 to April 2023 103 headache patients who presented to ED/AMU had an MRI Brain performed as part of the project and 90% of them had subsequent review in the Consultant-Led rapid access headache clinic.

The pilot over this time was seen to be significantly beneficial with:

- ▶ Avoided hospital admissions with estimated avoidance of 309 bed days
  - ▶ Reduced ED re-attendance rate: 4/103 re-attended ED, none with a primary complaint of headache
  - ▶ Improved staff satisfaction with very positive feedback from ED/AMU staff
  - ▶ Direct positive effect on the Hospital burden with a significant reduction in inpatient headache-related referrals
- ▶ Better patient experience: as a result of this initiative patients have received specialist headache care in a timely manner and in a more suitable care environment. Feedback yielded 100% patient satisfaction
  - ▶ Estimated savings of >€2,400 per patient, giving an estimated total saving of more than €240,000 over this period



Pictured from left to right with the Spark Award are Dr. Derek Hayden, Consultant AMU; Dr. Vicky Meighan, Consultant ED; Susanne Ledesma, Neurology Admin; Dr. Petya Bogdanova-Mihaylova, Consultant Neurologist; Sharon Moran, Clinical Nurse Specialist in headache disorders; Laura Gannon, Radiology Services Manager; Dr. Hannah O'Keeffe, Clinical Innovation Fellow and Karen Doyle, Radiology Admin

## Free Resource for Families of Stroke Patients

Dr. Áine Connolly, Principal Clinical Neuropsychologist and Wendy Moynan Social Work Team Leader from the Stroke Service launched a booklet entitled 'CHATS: Children Helped by Adults to Talk about Stroke' recently.

The aim of the booklet is to strengthen the coping resources of families caring for children at the time a relative has a stroke. Many families report a lack of confidence in relation to talking to children about the diagnosis of stroke and a concern about how their children are coping.

Using available evidence, this written resource with beautiful illustrations by Caroline Hyland aims to help adults:

- ▶ Understand the importance and benefits of talking to children about stroke
- ▶ Feel more confident about starting conversations
- ▶ Explain in an age appropriate way what a stroke is and the role of the multi-disciplinary rehabilitation team
- ▶ Recognise, understand and respond to their children's emotional support needs
- ▶ Maintain children's contact with their relative and plan hospital visits.

The booklet will be given to patients and families in TUH and is widely available to view online the [Hospital website](#).

Information about talking to children about illness contained within the booklet has potentially broader applicability across different clinical areas in TUH and other hospital settings

Developed in partnership with stroke survivors, and with the generous support of The Meath Foundation, Mary Hickey, Quality Improvement Lead, Joanne Coffey, Head of Communications and Alison Baker Kerrigan, Arts Officer.



Pictured from left to right at the CHATS launch were Wendy Moynan, TUH Social Work Team Leader, Rebecca Borland Smith, Stroke Survivor and Dr. Dan Ryan, Clinical Lead for Stroke at TUH

## New Cancer Research Clinic

**An important new Cancer Research Clinic, the first and only one of its kind in Ireland has been established in the Hospital. The new Testicular Survivorship Clinic is conducting research to try and discover new treatments for patients, who have had the disease.**

Those centrally involved in this important new clinic at TUH include; Dr. M Raheel Khan (Research Registrar) Prof Ray Mc Dermott (Medical Oncologist) and Advanced Nurse Practitioner in Oncology, Patrice Sheehan. The team started work on the clinic back in September 2022 and saw their first patient in October 2022. To date, they have seen around 75 patients.

So far medical staff involved in this trial at TUH have met with patients to examine them, take blood tests and get them to fill in a targeted questionnaire. If anything suspicious arises out of this initial screening then further tests, scans and if necessary follow-up treatment can be arranged. The team behind this new development are hoping this clinic will improve morbidity and mortality for patients with Testicular Cancer. Medical Oncologists around the country are very keen to replicate this model in other centres.

Testicular Cancer is typically diagnosed in a young male population (15 to 35 years) and has a cure rate of 95%. So there is a big cohort of patients who are survivors. Recent studies have shown a very high incidence of second cancers, cardiovascular events and psychological issues, resulting in higher rates of early deaths, suicide, unemployment and disabilities. To help them and intervene early if these other complications arise, numerous medical studies including this one at TUH are being conducted in the US, UK and Scandinavian countries.

In March 2023, at a stakeholder meeting of Cancer Trial Ireland, it was agreed to establish similar clinics nationwide. A central registry will be maintained in the Trials Unit of TUH. As a result, the TUH Cancer trials team will collect and maintain data on patients from all over Ireland.



*Pictured from left to right, Dr. M Raheel Khan, Research Registrar and Patrice Sheehan, Advanced Nurse Practitioner in Oncology*

## Praise for Transformational Programme

**Chronic kidney disease, affects over 11% of patients in the Irish Health System. There are currently 5,000 adults and children requiring treatment by dialysis or kidney transplantation in Ireland.**

This is an increase of nearly 50% in 13 years. As the second largest site for dialysis in the country, the Hospital has a growing number of transplant patients.

A new lifestyle programme created by Oonagh Smith, Clinical Specialist Renal Dietitian and Cliona Barrett, Senior Renal Physiotherapist has been described as transformational by patients who have attended the eight week virtual classes. The online classes took place twice a week for approximately 45 minutes each and included an exercise element and an education session on nutrition.

Sarah Williams who is 14 years post kidney transplant says the new programme came, "At a time when I needed it most for my physical and mental health. It has been great, the combination of exercise and nutrition is so important. I have even started sea swimming. I am more confident and the regular checks with the team in TUH, help keep me on my toes."



*Renal patient Sarah Williams who has completed the new transplant programme at the Hospital*

## New Consultants

Please see below new staff members to join the Consultant team at TUH.

Name	Discipline
Dr. Richard Armstrong	Consultant Cardiologist
Dr. Sebastian Trainor	Consultant Oncologist
Dr. Lynda Corrigan	Consultant Oncologist
Dr. Alison De Maio	Consultant Gynaecologist
Dr. Aoife Garrahy	Consultant Endocrinologist
Dr. Ferrah Shaamile	Consultant Endocrinologist



If you would like any more information about any articles in the Connect or have suggestions for future editions please do get in touch

Email: [GPConnect@tuh.ie](mailto:GPConnect@tuh.ie)