



The Research & Education Foundation Sligo General Hospital

Research & Education Foundation
Sligo General Hospital
www.ref-sligo.ie

NEWSLETTER

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Annual Research Conference

Stroke Prevention, motor neurone disease (ALS), vitamin levels in children with autism and effects of FAST campaign on stroke treatment. These are some of the research topics presented at this year's conference.

The record number of abstracts submitted to the conference is a reflection of the work and dedication of the many staff and students, who have undertaken research studies in the last year. Reviewers of the poster exhibition said that this year's standard was particularly high.

Professors Martin O'Donnell, NUIG and Orla Hardiman, Beaumont Hospital delivered the key note talks on their internationally recognised research.



Prof. Martin O'Donnell, NUIG; keynote speaker at 12th Annual Research Conference SGH

Prof. Martin O'Donnell presented INTERSTROKE, a global case control study into risk factors for stroke. The study, which is still ongoing and aims

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Abbott donation



Mette Jensen Kavanagh, REF; Mr. Pat Dolan, Chairman, REF; Hugh Clancy, Senior Account Executive, Abbott; Dr. Colleen O'Donnell, Scientific Services Manager, Abbott; Dr. Seamus Healy, Secretary to the Foundation Board.

Abbott Diagnostics has donated €5,000 to the Research & Education Foundation in 2011 and has committed to a further €5,000 in 2012. This is the third year in succession Abbott supports the Foundation and it establishes the company, which is also significant local employer, as a major contributor to the Foundation's work. Thank you to Abbott for the generous grant.

Gerry McManus steps down as REF Chair

Mr. Gerry McManus has stepped down as chairman after four years in the role. Staff and Board Members are hugely appreciative of his contribution as chairman over the last four years. His vision and business background has been an invaluable asset. Gerry McManus remains on the Board and has been elected treasurer

Pat Dolan chair

Pat Dolan has taken on the role of chair of the Foundation to guide the charity in attaining its mission. He has had prominent posts in the NWHB and HSE, most recently as HSE local health manager. Pat Dolan is officially retired but is still involved in work with NUIG and the HSE. He is well known nationally for his balanced approach to problem solving and good negotiating skills. A warm welcome to Pat Dolan to the Foundation.

Research Conference

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to recruit 25,000 stroke patients. The findings suggest that ten risk factors are associated with 90% of the risk of stroke. Targeted interventions that reduce blood pressure and smoking, and promote physical activity and a healthy diet, could substantially reduce the burden of stroke. Prof. O'Donnell also presented new research published in JAMA suggesting a J-shaped association between sodium intake and cardiovascular disease.

Prof. Orla Hardiman spoke about the Irish ALS register and her team's research into the disease. Their discoveries include a new gene for ALS; the discovery that particular variations in genes can make certain populations more susceptible to ALS than others; the discovery that Irish people with ALS come from families where other neurodegenerative conditions such as Dementia and Parkinsons are more common.

Local Researchers

Eight studies local were selected for oral presentation. Amongst others, Dr. Sinead O'Donnell, Paediatrics SGH, presented the results of a case control study on vitamin



Una Moffatt, CNS & Dr. Paula Hickey with prize-winning poster on FAST campaign study.

A and zinc levels in children with autism in the NW. The study was part funded by the Foundation. It concluded that children with ASD in the NW have mean Zinc and Vitamin A levels within the normal range.

Dr Nik Aimee Faheem from Dr. Paula Hickey's team at the medical dept SGH presented the results of a study which showed the proportion of stroke patients attending SGH within the crucial three-hour timeframe almost quadrupled following the Act Fast public awareness campaign.



Dr. Bryan Whelan, Maria Lynch, Majella Curry, Una Dunne Shannon all OLHM with prize winning poster on "Integrated Out-patient rehabilitation"

Other studies presented included 'GPs attitude to Termination of Pregnancy', 'Relationship between pain and anxiety scores', 'Outbreak of salmonella Heidelberg'. Abstract of all studies on www.ref-sligo.ie



Poster Prize Winners:

1st Prize Foundation Category:

Una Dunne Shannon, Rheumatology, OLHM "Integrated Out-patient rehabilitation"

2nd Prize Foundation Category:

Michael Cafferty, IT Sligo "Damage Accumulation due to Cyclic Loading in Bone on Hard & Soft Surfaces"

Highly Commended

a. John O'Toole, b. Sheiladen Aquino

Prizes sponsored by the Research & Education Foundation at SGH.

1st Prize NCHD Category:

Dr. David Kelly, Medical Dept, SGH "The Effect of a Public Information Media Campaign on Acute Stroke Presentation to an Irish Hospital"

2nd Prize NCHD Category:

Dr. Conor Hensey, Paediatrics, SGH "Low-flow air or oxygen via nasal cannulae to prevent desaturation in pre-term infants"

Highly Commended

a. Anna Gubbins, b. Dr. Joe Hussey, c. Dr. Mark Murphy

Prizes sponsored by Medical Board SGH

Pain Research SGH

Grants Awarded



James DeNash, Pfizer with Carol Murray and Dr. Therese O'Connor, SGH



Michelle Cosgrove & Jack Daly, Grünenthal awarding Dr. Therese O'Connor a research grant

Research Forum

Open to all

The first exploratory meeting of a new Research Forum at Sligo General Hospital took place in late October 2011. The initiative is in response to a wish for peer support of staff being involved in research. The purpose of the initial meeting was to establish what the needs of participants are and agree on a structure of future meetings. Ten people attended and several others had expressed an interest. Several ideas and issues emerged: Stronger collaboration with IT Sligo; use of patient data for observational / epidemiological research; challenges in continuity of projects commenced by NCHDs due to their short tenure. **Next meeting January 18 2012.**

Movember shave

In aid of Foundation



Alf Gregg and Alfie from Alfies Barber Shop

Staff, friends and customers of Yeats Tavern in Sligo came together for the end-of-Movember shave off celebration. Alfies The Barber Shop in Sligo generously clean-shaved 15 brave men in aid of the Foundation and raised an impressive €1,200. The donations will go towards the Men's Health Events in 2012. Thank you to all involved.

MRCG / HRB Grants 2012

Opportunity for grant for high quality research

The Research & Education Foundation is offering one €20,000 grant in the 2012 HRB/MRCG Funding Scheme.

The grant scheme is a joint venture between the Medical Research Charities Group (MRCG) and the Health Research Board (HRB). Nationally, the scheme will offer €1 million matching funding through the MRCG, of which the Foundation is a member. The Foundation is offering one **€20,000 grant** over one year through this scheme in 2012. Grants are allocated on a co-funding basis and will be awarded by competitive peer review.

The scheme is open to health professionals and academics in the

Sligo General Hospital catchment area and the project must have a strong involvement with Sligo General Hospital. Applicants will apply through the Foundation.

The deadline for applications to the Foundation is

Monday January 30th 2012.

Applications must be of a high standard in order to compete with grant applications from other charities, hospitals and academic institutions.

For further details and application form, see www.ref-sligo.ie



Research Seed Grants 2011

Three Research Seed Awards made in 2011

Foundation Chairman Pat Dolan announced the three recipients at the 12th Annual Research Conference in November 2011:

Dr. Carmel Silke, Consultant Rheumatologist, SGH: *"A Patient-Focused Interventions to Improve Osteoporosis Medication Adherence in the HSE NW"*

Gavin Sweeney, Old Age Psychiatry, Sligo: *"Experiences and perspectives of carers and users on the care at an acute mental health day hospital for Psychiatry of Later Life"*.

Moya Wilson, Bed Manager, SGH: *"The Patients Perspective on Day*



Pat Dolan awarding a grant to Tom O'Grady, St. Angela's College co-applicant on Gavin Sweeney's application.

of Surgery Admission for Elective Surgical Procedures in one Irish Hospital".

The grant scheme is funded solely by the Research & Education Foundation this year.

Thank you to 2011 donors

Have you signed up to the salary scheme yet?

The financial support of staff at Sligo General Hospital and Sligo Mental Health Service is vital to the activities of the Foundation.

Almost sixty individuals have contributed from their salaries in 2011, amounting to a total of over

€15,000 euro. Recent appointees to the hospital are encouraged to sign up to the scheme. At present most consultants are donors and other staffing groups are also giving a monthly donation. Look out for information on how to donate in the near future.

Library News

New Electronic Books for 2012

We have added an additional five titles to our electronic collection of Oxford Medical and Nursing Handbooks.

The new titles include the *Handbook of Endocrinology and Diabetes, Orthopaedics and Trauma, Medical Statistics, Sport and Exercise Medicine* and *Clinical Diagnosis*. Access all 23 titles available using your Athens password.

Table of Contents – Survey Results

The Library recently conducted an online survey of users of the electronic Table of Contents Service provided by the Library, in which the table of contents of relevant journals is emailed to service users as the journal is published, along with a link to the full text online.

A preliminary evaluation of the results indicates that over 70% of respondents regularly read online journals supplied by the Library, and nearly 80% of them access online journals using the Table of Contents Service. Almost three quarters of the respondents stated that they find this service very useful.

If you are not currently using this service and wish to do so, please contact the Library.

Are you making the most of hselibrary.ie?

A wide range of online databases, books and journals are available via www.hselibrary.ie and, at times, it can be difficult to know where to start. If you or your Department would like to know more about what is available to you for your particular specialty, please contact us to arrange an information or training session.

Contact Details

Please contact the Library on 071 9174604 or by email on sgl.library@hse.ie if you would like further information.

Drugs in Sport

Open Public Meeting with Dr. Cathy McHugh



Dr. Cathy McHugh, speaker at the open public meeting on Drugs in Sport with chairman of the event Roddy Gainer, Lecturer IT Sligo

Dr. Cathy McHugh, Consultant Endocrinologist at SGH gave an excellent talk on performance enhancing drugs used by elite and recreational athletes at an open public meeting in November 2011.

Dr. McHugh gave an account of her work with the World Antidoping Agency in UK on a project to develop a test for growth hormone abuse among athletes. This involved lab research and also track side dope testing of elite athletes at many world championships. She

spoke about some high profile doping cases in elite sports and outlined risks and perceived rewards of substances such as anabolic steroids, stimulants, blood doping, protein powder etc. Dr. McHugh also explained the challenges in catching the cheats.

The talk was attended by hundreds in a packed auditorium at IT Sligo. It was part of Science Week 2011 and sponsored by IT Sligo and Agilent.



Obesity Hub Launch SGH

The Foundation co-hosted the NW Launch of the Obesity Hub with the Institute of Public Health in August 2011. Prof. Kevin Balanda, Associate Director IPH and Nazih Eldin, HSE Lead on Obesity and Head of Health Promotion Dublin NE gave introductory talks which were followed by a workshop on Working with Data on the Health Well.



Nazih Eldin talked about tackling Obesity in Ireland

Contact Information

Research & Education Foundation

Level 6
Sligo General Hospital
Ph: 071 917 4678
Fax: 071 917 4679
www.ref-sligo.ie
ref.sligo@hse.ie

Chairman:

Mr Pat Dolan

Secretary:

Dr. Seamus Healy

Treasurer:

Mr. Gerry McManus

News Bites

Irish Times articles

The Irish Times published two articles on studies presented at the 12th Annual Research Conference: 'Life-saving 'Act Fast' campaign curtailed over cost' by Marese McDonagh and 'Over half of doctors support abortion' by Muiris Houston. See www.irishtimes.com

New website for REF in 2012

The Foundation is working on a new website. Compupac Sligo has kindly donated web design software. Look out for the launch in 2012.

CSTAR Statistics Course

Dr. Jean Saunders from CSTAR at Limerick University delivered a full day *Statistics and Sample Size Calculation* workshop in November 2011 at SGH. The course included an overview of quantitative research methodology, protocol design, information needed for sample size calculation and practical examples. Twenty people attended from many disciplines.

Research Skills Workshops

The programme of research skills courses will continue in 2012. Look out for courses and dates on our website.

Ideas for activities welcome

Contact the Foundation if you have ideas for meetings or other activities that are in line with the Foundation vision. We are here to support research & education within all disciplines.



Executive Officer:

Mette Jensen Kavanagh
mette.jensen@hse.ie
Ph: 071 917 1111 ext. 4204

Clinical Computing Facilitator

Orla Heffernan
orla.heffernan@hse.ie
Ph: 071 917 1111 ext. 4243