



# AIIHPC

Early Career Researcher Forum

## Early Career Researcher Forum Newsletter

December 2020

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### CONTACT US

For further information about the Forum, please contact the Chair, Monika Pilch [pilchm@tcd.ie](mailto:pilchm@tcd.ie) or Palliative Care Research Network Project Manager, Clodagh O'Donovan [codonovan@aiahpc.org](mailto:codonovan@aiahpc.org)

### WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR MONIKA PILCH

*"Help us shape the way palliative care research is conducted on the island of Ireland.  
Let's increase the impact together".*

Dear Early Career Researcher Forum (ECRF) Members,

Welcome to the Christmas Edition of the ECRF Quarterly Newsletter.

I am excited to provide our members with the most recent updates on the actions taken by the ECRF Steering Committee on your behalf. We are delighted to welcome three new members into the Committee: Rachel McCauley, Carolyn Kyne and Karie Dennehy. Supported by a strong team of early and mid-career researchers, we are positive about executing the ECRF Action Plan and will be sharing it with you in the early months of 2021.

We are proud to share with you the research, events, and community engagement our forum members are involved with through this Newsletter. Of note are the AIIHPC 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Palliative Care Research Network Symposium 2020 (ECRF Abstract Session), the ECRF podcast (featuring Dr Marita Hennessey), and the ECRF blog (featuring Yvonne Muldowney).

We are especially delighted to share our developments on the ECRF Research Peer-Support Project, led by Dr Cliona Lorton and Dr Mary Nevin. As part of this exciting initiative, we would like to invite you to the Stress First Aid presentation, facilitated by Dr Victoria Lunt and Dr Jennifer Wilson O'Raghallaigh. The session has been scheduled for 18<sup>th</sup> January and will aim to equip researchers with coping skills for conducting research in challenging times and contexts.

The ECRF Quarterly Newsletter has created an opportunity to exchange knowledge and information within our network. I would like to thank Dr Deborah Muldrew for leading on the completion of the Christmas edition of this important communication platform. As always, we encourage all our members to let us know about their most recent research achievements. Help us celebrate your work and highlight it to our networks. Please send your ideas and suggestions to our communications and social media officer, Dr Deborah Muldrew at [d.muldrew@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:d.muldrew@ulster.ac.uk). You can contact me directly with regards to any other matters ([pilchm@tcd.ie](mailto:pilchm@tcd.ie)).

I would like to thank our members for your support and assistance this year. I wish you health and prosperity in the upcoming Year 2021. May the New Year bring you peace, joy and happiness. We look into the future with hope. Let's look at the upcoming year as an opportunity to bring a positive change, and to continue to shape the way palliative care research is conducted on the island of Ireland.

Let's increase the impact together!

Monika  
Chairperson, AIIHPC ECRF Steering Committee



# Welcome to our new ECRF Steering Group members



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**General Member:** Rachel McCauley, School of Medicine, Trinity College Dublin

Rachel McCauley has a background in health psychology and is undertaking her PhD on bidirectional support exchange between patients and family caregivers in palliative care at Trinity College Dublin.

**General Member:** Carolyn Kyne

Carolyn has been a nurse for 35 years and currently works between the paediatric ward in Mullingar Regional Hospital and in the community caring for children with complex and palliative care needs. She started her Clinical Doctorate in 2018.



**General Member:** Dr Karie Dennehy, MRCPI, MICGP

Karie is a University College Cork (UCC) graduate of 2006. She is dual trained in General Practice, having completed the GP Training Programme in 2013, and Palliative Medicine Higher Specialist Training this year. She has a special interest in Care of the Older Person, and both undergraduate and postgraduate education.



## We need your help!

We are looking for people who would like to support the work of the ECRF from the island of Ireland and are particularly interested in members who are based in Northern Ireland. Some activities you may be involved in include writing/editing blogs, participating in our podcast series, and hosting online-based activities (e.g., webinars).

## UPCOMING AIIHPC EVENTS

### 'Stress First Aid for early to mid-career researchers'

18<sup>th</sup> January, 11am

This one-hour presentation aims to equip researchers with coping skills for conducting research in challenging times and contexts. It will be presented by Dr Victoria Lunt, and Dr Jennifer Wilson O'Raghallaigh.

[Click here to book your place.](#)

### PCRN Webinar Series

2nd February, 3.30pm

PCRN member Dr Maura Dowling will present an hour-long webinar on Quantitative Evidence Synthesis. There will be time for Q&A.

Please [register for this event by clicking here.](#)



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## Recent Event Summaries

### AllHPC Palliative Care Research Network 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium

Date: 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Summary: This symposium provided a mixture of live, interactive and recorded online sessions focused on community-based palliative care with 139 delegates attending the event. It included presentations from national and international experts exploring future changing needs for community-based palliative care, new models of care, how to improve community-based palliative care through outcome measures, and how to ensure access to early palliative care for all. It was fitting in the WHO year of the Nurse and Midwife to hear testimonies from many inspiring clinical nurse colleagues about the invaluable contribution that this profession makes to palliative care provision within the community on the Island of Ireland. As Vice Chair of the ECRF committee I particularly enjoyed hearing about the research activities of some of our forum members in the dedicated ECRF abstract session, and I would like to congratulate Dr Ann Fee and Julie Goss, joint winners of the best ECRF abstract award.

Written by: Dr Mary Nevin

### EAPC Research Network, EAPC Reference Group on Public Health and AllHPC Public Health Research in Palliative Care: Towards Solutions for Global Challenges

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Summary: More than 100 delegates attended the European Association for Palliative Care (EAPC) international 'Public Health Research in Palliative Care: Towards Solutions for Global Challenges' Seminar. AllHPC organised and hosted this 2nd International Research Seminar of the EAPC Research Network and EAPC Reference Group on Public Health and Palliative Care. This major international online research seminar included live presentations from leading researchers in the area of public health and palliative care from Northern Ireland, Scotland, Belgium, Australia, Netherlands and Sweden. The sessions focused on public health palliative care research, with keynote presentations on the challenges for COVID-19 and public health, bereavement, health promotion and palliative care and social care model of health. Keynote presentation and award-winning abstracts were followed by stimulating Q&A sessions with a panel of international experts within each theme. On demand content is available for delegates to view on the seminar's area on the Palliative Hub – Learning Platform until the end of December 2020. This includes videos oral abstract presentations, poster presentations and recordings of the live lectures and panel discussions. Abstract authors also had the opportunity to have their abstracts published in the Journal of Palliative Care and Social Policy. The seminar was supported by funding from the Irish Hospice Foundation.

Written by: Dr Deborah Muldrew

### Palliative Care Research Forum NI Responding to the challenges of 2020

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Summary: PCRf NI hosted a seminar which aimed to update, and support members respond to the challenges of 2020 and COVID-19. Ray Elder, Strategic Lead for Palliative Care in the South Eastern Trust discussed the ongoing challenges within clinical practice in 2020 and Professor Kevin Brazil, Professor of Palliative Care at Queen's University Belfast, demonstrated how grant applications have changed in light of COVID-19.

Written by: Professor George Kernohan

### OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

#### RCSI Faculty of Nursing & Midwifery: 40<sup>th</sup> Annual International Nursing & Midwifery Research and Education Virtual Conference

'Meeting the Needs of Modern Healthcare'.  
23<sup>rd</sup> February to 3<sup>rd</sup> March

[Click here](#) for more information about this event

#### Trinity Health and Education Research Conference

'Transforming Healthcare in a Changing World: New Ways of Thinking and Working'  
9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> March

[Click here](#) for more information

#### NHS R&D Annual Forum Conference 2021

16-18 May

[Click here](#) for more information on this event, to be held in Newcastle, UK

## ECRF Podcast



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Welcome to the latest edition in our ECRF podcast series, hosted by Stacey Power Walsh, who is an ECRF Committee member serving as Networking Officer. Stacey has just completed her PhD in Obstetrics and Gynaecology in the School of Medicine in UCC, where she explored experiences of pregnancies with major fetal anomalies using a mixed methods approach.



In this month's podcast, Dr Marita Hennessy lovingly speaks about her father and her experience of him receiving palliative care, the respect, compassion and dignity delivered to her Dad and her family, and the comfort that this brought as he was cared for at home in his final days. She shares the benefits of good communication among all those involved in her father's care and how this assisted in his continued care. Marita also speaks about the conflicting emotions experienced with wanting to spend time with her Dad as he lived with his life-limiting illness but needing to honour her PhD commitments and the importance of her supervisors' support in allowing her time with her Dad and time to grieve following his death. These supports, the community supports, and the ways in which she honours her Dad's memory brings her much comfort.

**Listen here:** [tinyurl.com/ECRFpodcasts](https://tinyurl.com/ECRFpodcasts).

Dr Marita Hennessey, Marita is a postdoctoral researcher within the Pregnancy Loss Research Group at the INFANT Centre, UCC. Marita holds a BSc in Nutrition and a Diploma in Youth and Community Work from University College Cork, and a MA in Health Education and Health Promotion, and a Specialist Diploma in Teaching, Learning and Scholarship from the University of Limerick. For her doctoral studies, she examined behavioural interventions delivered by health professionals during the first 1,000 days to promote healthy growth and associated behaviours. She is experienced in a range of research methods.





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## Blog Spotlight



### **Palliative care in Intensive Care Units: A PhD Research Study**

**Author: Yvonne Muldowney,  
Trinity College Dublin**

This blog will be of interest to those working in Intensive Care Units (ICU) and those interested in palliative care research on the Island of Ireland. The majority of patients in ICU are over 65 years, have chronic illnesses and multi-morbidities. Substantial evidence shows that patients in ICU have palliative care needs, such as pain, family-clinician conflicts, spiritual distress and complicated grief. Early palliative care is advocated for, in conjunction with treatment, for these types of patients. Yet, within evidence it is unclear whether these recommendations are being met in Ireland's ICUs.

My PhD aims to adapt, implement and evaluate the PAL.M.ED. pathway for the ICU. In collaboration with key-stakeholders the PAL.M.ED approach will be adapted (PAL.M.ED-ICU) and implemented into ICU. A scoping review and needs analysis will inform its adaptation. This pre-post project will be an intervention study examining through mixed methods the impact of integrating palliative care on patients' outcomes. The setting will be an adult 18 bed-ICU in a large urban hospital. The study will include all patients admitted to ICU for three-four months before and after PAL.M.ED-ICU implementation. A pre-post audit will be used to collect data in order to establish a benchmark of current practice against a standard of care for ICU palliative care.

This study will result in an evidence-based approach for integrating palliative care into ICU to improve the standard of palliative care and to enhance the effective use of ICU resources.

The full version of this blog is available here: [LINK](#)

This PhD study is funded by:



**IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL**  
An Chomhairle um Thaighde in Éirinn

# Celebrating our members' achievements



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**We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our ECRF members on all their hard work throughout 2020. Here are some examples of what some ECRF members have been working on:**

At the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual PCRN Symposium "Community Based Palliative Care" on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020, four early career researchers showcased their work in an engaging online session (Dr Anne Fee, Dr Cliona Lorton, Dr Niamh Cleary, Julie Goss)

A huge congratulations to **Dr Anne Fee** and **Julie Goss** on a joint first place for their Early Career Researcher Forum Abstract presentations

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**Jeff Hanna** (Ulster University) passed his PhD viva with no amendments on 24<sup>th</sup> November. His PhD was titled: Facilitating family support when a parent of dependent children is at end of life. Some of the findings of his PhD have been published in [Palliative Medicine](#), [Psycho-Oncology](#), and [Death Studies](#). We wish Jeff good luck in his new posts at University of Oxford and University of Strathclyde.

**Stacey Power Walsh** (University College Cork) passed her viva on 7<sup>th</sup> December. Her PhD was titled: Exploring experiences of pregnancy with major fetal anomalies. Some of the findings of her PhD have been published in [BJOG](#), [Prenatal diagnosis](#), Qualitative Health Research (in press), and [International Journal of Palliative Nursing](#). We wish Stacey good luck in her new post as Assistant Professor in Children's Nursing in University College Dublin.

A patient guide to Palliative Radiotherapy has now been published and will be available throughout the network of St Luke's Radiation Oncology Centres. This booklet was developed by **Kim Hayden**, CNS Palliative Care, Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services in collaboration with Dr Charles Gillham, Radiation Oncologist, and SLRON.

We look forward to reading the new systematic review "Factors associated with health professionals' decision to initiate paediatric advance care planning: a systematic integrative review" written by **Karen Carr** (Ulster University) which has been accepted for publication by Palliative Medicine (accepted 28<sup>th</sup> November 2020).

Congratulations to all the early career researchers who contributed to the 11<sup>th</sup> EAPC World Congress. Published abstracts are highlighted below

- Development of core indicators of non-specialist palliative care in hospitals - an international Delphi study, by **Nevin, Mary**, Payne, Sheila, Hynes, GERALYN, and Smith, Valerie
- Paediatric advance care planning initiation in the UK and Ireland: a survey, by **Carr, Karen**, Hasson Felicity, McIlpatrick Sonja, and Downing Julia

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## Interested in sharing your successes?

If you would like us to share your successes through our newsletter, email updates, or twitter, please get in touch by contacting our communications and social media officer, Dr Deborah Muldrew at [d.muldrew@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:d.muldrew@ulster.ac.uk). Information for Twitter can be shared at any time, but if you would like to be included in the Spring edition of the ECRF Newsletter, please send your information to us before 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021.