



Health Promotion Research Centre

Research Activities

January to December 2020





Health Promotion Research Centre
 National University of Ireland Galway
www.nuigalway.ie/hprc
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Message from the Director

2020 will be remembered as a difficult, challenging and emotional year for all of us. When our university campus closed its doors in March 2020 most of us never thought we would still be working remotely at the end of the year. However, public health restrictions and the need to protect each other meant that all our staff worked from home from March-December 2020. Despite the disruption this brought and the associated challenges of working from home, our staff were resilient and committed to their research. They found ways to work remotely and still support each other. While some projects had to be suspended for short periods, we are grateful for support from the Health Education Authority for costed-extensions to some of our projects. Ultimately we found innovative ways of conducting our research and overcoming challenges and obstacles brought about by the pandemic. Looking back we had a productive year with our synergies and commitment to health promotion research evident in this annual report. Overall we managed to deliver excellent work that meets the needs of communities, populations, service providers and academic scholarship that span both local, national and international interests.

A huge success in 2020 was our 24th annual health promotion conference. This was our first virtual conference, which was chaired by Drs Lisa Pursell and Mary Jo Lavelle and was held on 18th June 2020. In association with our partners, Healthy Ireland, the Health Service Executive and the Association for Health Promotion Ireland, we were delighted to welcome our 294 delegates, from 15 countries. The focus was on 'Promoting health and wellbeing: creating a more equitable and sustainable environment'. The webinars and presentations from this year's annual Health Promotion conference are available to view on the Conference 2020 Web Channel. While we missed meeting each other face-to-face and networking over coffee and lunches, the event widened our reach and impact.

Our 'Population Health' seminar series with our colleagues in the Health Behaviour Change Research Group and the HRB Primary Care Clinical Trials Network Ireland continued in 2020 with the PPI Ignite team joining us in the planning and organisation of events. Seminars moved online which opened up the opportunity for people to present and to attend who may not normally have done so.

As part of our designated World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Health Promotion Research, we have been working on projects related to promoting population mental health and wellbeing, effective ways of developing health literate organisations, healthy cities, the sustainable development goals, and contributing to developing the next European Child and Adolescent Health strategy.

The global pandemic meant that our visiting academics, students and research fellows had to return home early in 2020. We were disappointed for them and ourselves but we look forward to brighter days when we can welcome back new and past visitors.

The skills and expertise of our staff, each of whom play a critical role in the success of the Centre are evident in this report. I am grateful for everyone's contribution over the past year. In particular I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Dr Viv Batt, our Administrative Director who is the backbone to our Centre and whose unwavering support of us all is amazing.

Dr Colette Kelly Director, Health Promotion Research Centre



Our Vision and Values

Our Health Promotion research activities are underpinned by the values of equity, empowerment, sustainability and are inter-sectoral and holistic. These are in line with NUI Galway's strategic plan (www.nuigalway.ie/strategy2025), which is built on core values that define our university's purpose and priorities.



WHO Collaborating Centre for Health Promotion Research

WHO Collaborating Centre

The Health Promotion Research Centre (HPRC) at NUI Galway was re-designated as a World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Health Promotion Research in 2017 for a further four year period to 2021. During this four year term we have supported the WHO work programme in developing health promotion capacity through the translation of health promotion research into policy and practice.

Our terms of reference are:

To support the WHO in implementing the Shanghai Declaration (WHO, 2016) through providing technical support on evidence-informed health promotion actions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UN, 2015).

This constituted the following activities during 2020:

Developing intersectoral action for promoting population mental health and wellbeing (with reference to SDG3.4).

This activity involves the development of translational research papers and resources, including evidence reviews on the implementation of mental health promotion interventions for adolescents and young people. This work was carried out in collaboration with the WHO Regional Office for Europe.

A country case study is being produced on the process of developing a national plan on promoting population mental health and wellbeing as a core function of ensuring healthy lives and promoting wellbeing for all. The case study is based on the process of developing a National Mental Health Promotion Plan as part of the intersectoral Healthy Ireland National Framework and the Connecting for Life national suicide prevention strategy.

Progressing action on effective ways of developing health literate organisations.

This activity concerns the development and implementation of a health literacy action plan in a regional hospital setting, and seeks to draw out learning concerning the scaling up of health literacy policy development at an organisational level. Work on the case study has been completed by Dr Jane Sixsmith and Dr Verna McKenna with the submission of a Briefing Paper in October 2020, documenting the process of developing a health literacy responsive organisation.

Outputs Delivered

McNeice, C., & the Health Literacy Committee. (2020). Outpatient Patient Satisfaction Survey Results, Galway.

Sixsmith, J. & McKenna, V. (2020). Briefing Paper: Progressing Action on Effective Ways of Developing Health Literate Organizations. World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Health Promotion Research, National University of Ireland Galway.

Contributing to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (with particular reference to SDG 11) through developing knowledge resources for effective action in partnership with Healthy Cities and Communities.

This activity supports partnerships and collaborative networks to progress knowledge transfer of the core components of Healthy Cities and Communities. A networking event, with participation from national and international stakeholders, took place at NUI, Galway, titled: 'Promoting Health and Wellbeing: Creating a more equitable and sustainable environment for health'. Dr Mary Jo Lavelle and Dr Lisa Pursell coordinated and co-chaired this international online conference on Healthy Cities and Communities, bringing together key stakeholders to advance partnerships and collaborative networks in research, policy and practice developments in this area.



Outputs Delivered

Coordination and chairing of an international conference on Healthy Cities and Communities (Galway, June 18th 2020). All conference presentations and keynote addresses are available to view on the Conference 2020 Web Channel.

To support the WHO Europe Regional Office implementation of 'Investing in Children: Child and Adolescent Health Strategy 2015-2020'.

This activity provides technical support and guidance on the WHO Europe Child and Adolescent Health Strategy and the improvement of processes to maximise positive outcomes for young people. Dr Colette Kelly has played a lead role in planning and coordinating child and youth engagement activities related to the development of the next European Child and Adolescent Health Strategy. Youth engagement experts from across the European Region (n=7 countries) consulted with children and young people (aged 9-23) through a series of participatory workshops to enable youth to describe priorities for child and adolescent health. The opinions of the children and young people in these workshops helped to inform initial priorities for the future direction of WHO Child and Adolescent health strategy in the Region.

A report was also prepared on the inclusion of non-typical student groups in the HBSC study process. This report focused on our experiences of recruiting and collecting relevant data from younger children (aged 8-11) and older children (aged 16-18).



Outputs Delivered

Craig, R., on behalf of youth participation expert group (2020). High level summary of youth engagement workshops in developing the next European Child and Adolescent Health Strategy. Report to Dr Martin Weber, January 2020.

Scott, E., Kelly, C., on behalf of youth participation expert group (2020). High level summary of youth priorities in developing the next European Child and Adolescent Health Strategy. Report to Dr Martin Weber, September 2020.

Kelly, C., Gavin, A., & Nic Gabhainn, S. (2020). Surveying middle childhood and older adolescence in HBSC Ireland. Report to Dr Martin Weber, October 2020.

Other Activities requested by WHO:

Development of the Lifeskills Education School Handbook:

In collaboration with Dr Faten Ben Abdelaziz and her team at WHO HQ, work was undertaken in 2020 on finalising a School Handbook on the application of a lifeskills approach to the prevention of non-communicable diseases, by Dr Colette Kelly, Professor Saoirse Nic Gabhainn and Professor Margaret Barry.

Outputs Delivered

WHO (2020) Life skills education school handbook: prevention of noncommunicable diseases – Introduction. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2020. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO. ISBN 978-92-4-000484-9 (electronic version) ISBN 978-92-4-000485-6 (print version).

WHO (2020) Life skills education school handbook: prevention of noncommunicable diseases – Approaches for schools. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2020. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO. ISBN 978-92-4-000502-0 (electronic version) ISBN 978-92-4-000503-7 (print version).



Our Projects

Exploring the world of food – the perspective of families with children



Principal Investigator: Dr Colette Kelly (NUI Galway)

Collaborators: Professor Jayne Woodside and Dr Michelle McKinley (Queen's University Belfast), Dr Janas Harrington and Ms Marita Hennessy (UCC); Dr Caroline Heary and Ms Edel Murphy (NUI Galway), Ms Denise Cahill (Health Promotion, Cork)

Researchers: Ms Divya Ravikumar (NUI Galway), Dr Elena Vaughan (NUI Galway) and Dr Eleni Spyreli (Queen's University Belfast)

Funder: SafeFood, the Food Safety Promotion Board

Introduction

Parents are influenced by numerous factors when deciding what, where and when to eat with their children. These competing and interacting factors include psychological, social and environmental influences that parents must navigate and respond to. The role of social and physical environments in determining food choice is now recognised as equal if not more important than individual behaviour; such environments vary considerably and contribute to nutritional health inequalities. It has also been suggested that the built environment may have a stronger effect among those of low socio-economic status, as they must tolerate the default options in their communities.

This study aims to understand how families make decisions about meals and snacks when a multitude of factors are at play. This research will guide future interventions in the area of family food environments and will contribute to recommendations for promoting healthy eating to families.

Aim: to explore the micro-environmental context in which parents at a disadvantage make decisions about the food they purchase, prepare and consume.

Objectives

- To work collaboratively with a panel of parents on the project research questions, recruitment and dissemination.
- To synthesize the qualitative literature on parental perspectives of the micro-environmental factors that influence food prepared and eaten among low-income parents with children.
- To explore the micro-environmental context in which low-income families with children make decisions about the food they prepare and eat.
- To explore the differences in these contexts between families with children at different developmental stages.
- To identify the major food decision points (i.e. meals, snacks), the settings in which they occur and the context trigger points, by family type.
- To explore strategies used, by family type, to navigate and make food decisions within their food environment.



Methods

A qualitative approach, using creative research methods is being employed in this study. Creative research methods including photovoice and participatory mapping techniques are planned. 'Go-along' food shopping tours will also be employed with a small sample of parents.

Results

The qualitative literature has been synthesized using a rapid review approach. A journal article detailing the rapid review process and findings is under peer-review. Data collection is complete in NI and is coming to an end in ROI. All data collection took place online due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related public health restrictions.

Patient Public Involvement

Parents played an active role in designing the study materials and in recruitment. Parents on the panel reflect the parents recruited for the study, e.g. parents that are under financial pressure or those living on a tight budget. Additional meetings of the parent group will take place to discuss dissemination plans for the study findings.

Knowledge Translation

Knowledge will be translated with the aid of the parent panel. The parent panel will help to plan an event to disseminate results at the end of this project. A report will also be published by SafeFood, with an accompanying social media campaign. Journal articles will also be written and findings will be communicated through RTÉ Brainstorm and other mediums.

Presentations

Ravikumar, D., Spyreli, E., Woodside, J., McKinley, M., Kelly, C. (2020, December). Parental perspectives on the influence of food environments on food decisions among low-income parents with children. Oral presentation session. Excellence in Pediatrics Institute 12th Conference, Virtual conference. 3rd – 5th December 2020.

Elena Vaughan, Postdoctoral Researcher

What research interests were you pursuing in 2020?

In 2020, I worked with my colleague Dr András Költö on a Landscape and Knowledge Gap Analysis on LGBTI+ youth research in Ireland and Europe. The project, which was funded by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), represented a great opportunity to deepen my skills and knowledge of systematic review methodologies. It is further gratifying to be able to work on a project with decision-makers and carry out work that will inform national policy priorities.



Working in collaboration with Dr Colette Kelly and in close liaison with eight international research teams and WHO, I also led on development of the second phase protocol for youth consultation on the forthcoming WHO European Child Health Strategy 2020-2030 Strategy.

I was delighted in 2020 to have the first paper from my PhD published in AIDS Care. The article details findings from a qualitative study carried out as part of my PhD research which explored experiences of stigma in healthcare settings among people living with HIV in Ireland.

What are your research plans for 2021 and beyond?

Currently I am working on a SafeFood funded project exploring the food environments and dietary choices of families living on a tight budget. I will also be leading a project funded by the Department of Justice to conduct a rapid review of the evidence in respect of anti-social behaviour in Ireland.



Cross-national digital health literacy among third level students during COVID-19

Principal Investigators: Professor Saoirse Nic Gabhainn, Dr Colette Kelly, Dr Jane Sixsmith with Dr Pádraig MacNeela, Department of Psychology, NUI Galway

Researchers: Ms Aisling Harrington with Dr Kate Dawson and Dr Lorraine Burke, Department of Psychology, NUI Galway

Background

Sorensen et al. (2012) described Health Literacy as the “knowledge, motivation and competences to access, understand, appraise, and apply health information ... to maintain or improve quality of life” (p. 3). Digital Health Literacy is the application of this to information sources available in the virtual space. Related to the current pandemic crisis caused by the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19), a large amount of health information is available on the internet on issues such as diagnosis, treatment, protective behaviour, preventive measures, dashboard statistics and public recommendations. This study, part of an international initiative with study teams in more than 50 countries globally, investigates the extent of higher-level students accessing and using such information, and whether their critical use of the information is related to socio-demographic factors, health-related stress and burden and general online information seeking behaviour.

Aim and objectives

To generate a cross-sectional picture of digital health literacy competencies in higher education students in Ireland, and the extent to which these competencies are related to well-being and coping strategies.

Design and methods

This was a cross-sectional survey of students, with an international standard questionnaire administered electronically. Approval was granted by the NUI Galway Research Ethics Committee. All 31 higher education institutions (HEIs) in Ireland were invited to participate and 20 agreed. Questionnaire dissemination within HEIs was supplemented with a social media campaign. In total 9813 students enrolled in 27 HEIs completed the online questionnaire.

Dissemination

Eight of the higher education institutions who participated requested individual reports on their own students. A template for reporting was developed, and all of these institutions have been sent reports on their own students. Analyses of the full dataset is currently underway. The Irish dataset will be combined with those of the 50 other participating countries for cross-national comparison.

Knowledge Translation

The reports supplied to individual institutions have been reviewed and, in some cases, have informed practice and strategic plans. Further knowledge translation focused outputs will follow the analyses of the full Irish and international datasets.



LGBTI+ two phased study: A landscape and knowledge gap analysis of research conducted on sexual and gender minority youth in Ireland and Europe

Principal Investigator: Professor Saoirse Nic Gabhainn and Dr Colette Kelly

Researchers: Dr András Költő and Dr Elena Vaughan

International Collaborator: Professor Elizabeth Saewyc (University of British Columbia, Canada)

Funder: Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY)

Background

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and other Sexual and Gender Minority (LGBTI+, SGM) individuals experience inequality, injustice and marginalisation in several dimensions of life. Research evidence shows that LGBTI+ people have poorer health across different indicators compared to their peers. These disparities are rooted in adolescence, when most SGM individuals are beginning to discover and adjust to their identities. Because negative life experiences in childhood and adolescence may have long-lasting impact on health and wellbeing, it is essential the inequalities and marginalisation SGM youths experience are addressed effectively and systematically. However, recently it has been recognised that these studies maintain a “victimising” narrative on SGM youth, and factors which help them to build resilience in face of adversities and positive aspects of their lived experiences are neglected. Therefore, there is a need for a more balanced approach which does not downplay SGM young people’s health inequalities but seeks to empower and help them develop a happy and fulfilling life.

Aims and objectives

In 2018, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (then Department of Children and Youth Affairs) in the Republic of Ireland published the *LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy 2018-2020*, the world’s first governmental strategy dedicated to improving the lives of SGM young people. The DCEDIY commissioned the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Ireland Research Team, located at the Health Promotion Centre, National University of Ireland Galway, to map and analyse research carried out in Ireland (and more broadly, in Europe) regarding LGBTI+ young people’s lives and to identify gaps in existing knowledge.

Design and methods

The landscape and knowledge gap analysis is based on a scoping review methodology (Költő, Vaughan, Ravikumar, Kelly, O’Sullivan, Saewyc, & Nic Gabhainn, 2019). Empirical studies published in peer-reviewed outlets, grey literature and datasets have been synthesised. In total, 127 pieces of evidence were identified from Ireland and other European countries (individual studies and data) and from Europe and North America (reviews and meta-analytic investigations). The final report is in preparation.

Patient Public Involvement

It had originally been planned that the report will also contain observations and recommendations from LGBTI+ young people and adults from Ireland, elicited from community engagement workshops hosted by our Knowledge Translation Partner, AMACH! LGBT. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the workshops were cancelled. The research team is working with DCEDIY to host an online workshop with the participation of the LGBTI+ Youth Advisory Board of the Department.

Knowledge Translation

Knowledge Translation (KT) is an integrated element of this project, and the KT plan formed part of the initial proposal. We have planned KT activities over 2021.

Monitoring the implementation of the MindOut social and emotional learning programme in post-primary schools in Mayo: A case study approach

Principal Investigator: Professor Margaret Barry

Researcher: Dr Katherine Dowling

Funder: Mental Health Ireland (MHI)

Partners: Mental Health Ireland (MHI), Mayo Mental Health Association (MHA), Mindspace Mayo, Health Service Executive (HSE)

A partnership to support the implementation of the MindOut programme in Mayo schools has been established by Mental Health Ireland with Mayo MHA, Mindspace Mayo, the local Mental Health Ireland Development Officer, and with support from HSE Health and Wellbeing who will provide advice, guidance and additional training for the teachers involved. This evaluation study has been commissioned by Mental Health Ireland in this context.

The MindOut programme is a social and emotional learning (SEL) programme that was developed by the Health Promotion Research Centre, NUI Galway and the Health Promotion and Improvement Department, HSE and is designed to strengthen young peoples' (15-18 years) social and emotional skills and improve their overall mental health and wellbeing. A large-scale evaluation was recently carried out with DEIS post-primary schools in Ireland (Dowling et al., 2019; Dowling & Barry 2020a, 2020b) and demonstrated that while the MindOut programme can be effective in producing positive outcomes for participants, this was only the case when the programme was delivered with high-quality.

Based on this original study, the current study seeks to monitor the implementation of the MindOut social and emotional wellbeing programme for post-primary students in Mayo (15-18 years old) and highlight the key factors which lead to higher quality implementation in schools, as well as identifying strategies for supporting schools in implementing the programme.

The key objectives of this study are to:

- Assess the implementation quality by monitoring the implementation support system.
- Examine the implementation quality of the intervention itself across multiple dimensions.
- Investigate the contextual factors that contribute to level of implementation quality.
- Develop a model of support for successful implementation of MindOut in schools.

Methods

Employing a case study approach, a mixed methods explanatory research design is employed to assess the implementation of the MindOut programme within the local context of the participating schools. The evaluation of the implementation of MindOut is examined based on the conceptual models of implementation developed by Chen (1998) and Greenberg et al., (2005). Monitoring of the *intervention* itself and the *implementation support system* is being carried out in six post-primary schools in Mayo. The case study includes both qualitative and quantitative methods to examine the quality of implementation across the schools and explore the views of teachers, pupils and school management on the implementation of the programme.

Within each school, data are collected via online surveys, semi-structured telephone interviews and online focus groups. The surveys are carried out with teachers, students and school management to assess the implementation of the MindOut intervention, particularly in relation to the implementation support system and the types of support needed to ensure high-quality implementation. These measures are employed at three different stages in the programme delivery (pre-delivery, delivery, post-delivery).

Knowledge Translation

This project aims to use the study findings to inform the development of a model of support for the successful implementation of MindOut. This model will be shared with relevant organisations locally and nationally in order to enhance the support provided to schools who are implementing this programme. To date, over 600 teachers have been trained in MindOut and it is envisaged that the model of support will facilitate stronger implementation of the programme, which in turn will lead to better outcomes for participants.

Mayo schools lead the way in implementing a mental health and wellbeing programme for students

Mayo schools are to implement a mental health and wellbeing programme in the classroom over the next three years with the support of local organisations.

The rollout of the MindOut programme in Mayo is a joint project by charities Mental Health Ireland, Mayo Mental Health Association and Mindspace Mayo in partnership with the HSE and the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG).

MindOut has been developed by HSE Health and Wellbeing and the Health Promotion Research Centre at NUIG, and has been shown to improve young people's overall mental health and wellbeing.

The timely rollout of this programme aims to support the mental health and wellbeing of students and equip them with skills and coping strategies to manage current challenges in their lives, not least those resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The evidence-based social and emotional learning programme was first developed in 2004 with the aim of supporting the social, emotional and mental wellbeing of young people

aged 15-18 years in post-primary schools.

The findings from the large-scale evaluation of the programme showed that MindOut has very positive benefits for young people, including improved social and emotional skills, such as coping and emotional regulation, and reduced levels of stress and depression, including for the most vulnerable young people.

The 2017 study also showed that supporting teachers to deliver the programme led to better implementation and more positive mental health outcomes for students.

Peadar Gardiner, Project Manager at Mindspace Mayo said: "We believe we can support future generations of our young people by supporting and investing in the mental health of our youth."

"That's why supporting MindOut is so important to us. MindOut is a fantastic programme that has a strong focus on mental health promotion and prevention - helping our young people to flourish and to learn the skills for coping with the challenges of everyday life."

"We want to give our young people

the best possible start in life, and providing them with mental health and wellbeing education is a vital component."

Niall Dwyer, Manager at the Mayo Mental Health Association, said: "We are delighted to partner with Mindspace Mayo, NUIG, HSE and Mental Health Ireland to launch the MindOut Programme in Mayo."

"As a Mental Health Association, being able to teach young people skills for life, including how to cope with everyday difficulties and how to communicate effectively with and get along with other people (while teaching self awareness and building emotional resilience), is absolutely key to our mission."

The MindOut programme will be delivered by teachers to senior cycle students in post primary schools over the next three years initially, but it is hoped, the project will continue beyond this and become embedded in the school curriculum. One-to-one support will be provided to teachers delivering the programme at local level from the organisations leading the project.

The implementation of the

programme will be monitored by NUIG researchers, led by leading mental health promotion expert and author Professor Margaret Barry, in order to develop a model of support for the sustainable delivery of MindOut in schools and provide feedback for

future delivery nationally. The Mayo project will help to identify the key factors that support implementation, from within the school and outside of it and will inform the rollout of the programme in post primary schools across Ireland.



The launch of the MindOut schools programme in Bally Secondary school last year.

Tuuli Kuosmanen, Postdoctoral Researcher

What research interests were you pursuing in 2020?

For the past year, I have been involved in a European research project focusing on developing a theoretical framework and training resources for youth workers in promoting young people's positive mental health. In Spring 2020, we published an evidence-based framework for promoting positive mental health in the European youth sector, drawing from the extensive literature on social and emotional learning.



Although my previous research has focused on promoting the mental health of young people, this project has allowed me to strengthen my understanding of best practice in promoting mental health and wellbeing in the youth sector and the theory and practice of enhancing social and emotional skills among young people.

This project has given me the opportunity to collaborate with partners from various different European countries. Working with youth workers and youth work trainers from Ireland and abroad has been a valuable experience in widening my understanding of the practical and cultural considerations regarding promoting mental health and wellbeing in the youth settings across the European countries.

What are your research plans for 2021 and beyond?

In Spring 2021, we plan to pilot an online training programme for youth workers in Ireland and internationally. I look forward to bringing this project to a close and exploring further opportunities for national and international collaboration for enhancing mental health promotion practice in youth settings.

Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Ireland



Principal Investigators: Professor Saoirse Nic Gabhainn and Dr Colette Kelly, with Dr Michal Molcho, Children's Studies, NUI Galway

Researchers: Ms Aoife Gavin, Dr András Költő, Dr Elena Vaughan, Ms Divya Ravikumar and Ms Lorraine Walker

Funder: Department of Health

Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) is a cross-national research study conducted in collaboration with the WHO Regional Office for Europe. The HBSC study runs on an academic four-year cycle (www.hbcs.org). HBSC collects information on the key indicators of health, health attitudes and health behaviours, as well as the context of health for young people. The study was established in 1982. There has been a constant growth in the number of participating countries in the HBSC network: internationally, HBSC currently includes 50 countries from North America, Europe, and the post-Soviet region. Researchers from NUI Galway, with the leadership of Professor Saoirse Nic Gabhainn, joined the network in 1994, with the first data collection taking place in 1998. The 2018 survey was the sixth time that Ireland has been involved in this international collaborative study.

Aim and objectives

Both the national HBSC team and the international research network aim to: gain new insight into young people's health and well-being; understand the social determinants of health; and to inform policy and practice to improve young people's lives.

Design and methods

The HBSC study is conducted in schools with data collected through self-completion questionnaires administered by teachers in the classroom. The survey instrument is a standardised questionnaire developed by the international research network, which is supplemented by questions on issues of national importance for practice and policy development. The survey is administered to a representative sample of 11-, 13- and 15-year-old students in each participating country. In Ireland, primary (3rd-6th class) and post-primary (Years 1st-5th) school pupils take part in the survey, thus children aged 9-17 years are represented in the sample. The most recent national data collection took place in 2018, with 15,557 students responding from 255 schools.

Public Patient Involvement

Young people actively participate in various stages of the HBSC research cycle, from formulating research and survey questions to prioritising topics for dissemination. In 2019 workshops were conducted with post-primary Transition Year students to discuss which topics should be prioritised for and subsequently included in the 2020 HBSC International report published in June by WHO Euro. School students were also invited to submit art work for the international report, and examples were selected for inclusion.



HBSC Ireland in 2020

Last year, the main tasks for the HBSC Ireland Team were: prepare and launch the 2018 Irish national report; assist in the preparation of the HBSC international report, and the launch in Ireland; and to continue research dissemination activities.

Dissemination

The national report of the 2018 HBSC Ireland study was launched in January 2020; and the report from the International study was launched in June 2020, along with a special issue of the Journal of Adolescent Health on trends in HBSC. Two MA theses (Ruth Carr and Jen Coyle) and one PhD thesis (Lorraine Burke) using HBSC Ireland data were completed and successfully examined in 2020. Findings from the HBSC Ireland study were presented in 29 peer-reviewed journal articles, seven national and three international reports, and two other journal articles in 2020. Team members made nine presentations at national and international conferences. We continued work on the Short Report series and provision of specific requested analyses from government, NGO and the community sector were conducted. All outputs from HBSC Ireland are available at www.nuigalway.ie/hbcs.



Knowledge Translation

The HBSC Ireland Team is involved in several forms of knowledge translation, addressing various topics on adolescent health and across different audiences. HBSC Ireland operates a knowledge translation helpdesk to respond to data requests from health authorities, local governments, and fellow researchers. In 2020 key national indicators of child wellbeing from HBSC Ireland data were used in the State of the Nation's Child report from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. Two specific policy reports were built around HBSC data. The first was a collaboration with the Institute of Public Health focused on exposure to ultraviolet radiation and sun safety behaviours and the second was on the health and wellbeing of young carers as part of a collaboration with Family Carers Ireland. The HBSC Ireland twitter page (@hbcsireland) reports regularly on our outputs and their impact.

András Költő, Postdoctoral Researcher

What research interests were you pursuing in 2020?

Last year I co-ordinated a Landscape and Knowledge Gap Analysis on LGBTI+ youth research in Ireland and other European countries, commissioned by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. We conducted a systematic review on the evidence base relevant to the National LGBTI+ Youth Strategy, which will be used to prioritise research gaps and inform policy. This project enabled me to hone my skills in leading a project in evidence synthesis and working with decision-makers.



In a collaboration with the Institute of Public Health in Ireland, I conducted a study on sun and UV-related behaviours (sun protection, experience of sunburn and indoor

tanning bed use) in young people in Ireland. I had never studied environmental determinants of youth health before; therefore this area was entirely novel but very exciting for me. As part of my role as Chair of the Sexual Health working group of the international Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) network, I led the development of new international protocols on sexual initiation, contraception use, circumstances of last intercourse, sexual orientation and gender identity for the 2021/2022 survey cycle.

What are your research plans for 2021 and beyond?

The international HBSC Network appointed me to lead a working group developing a comprehensive measure that can identify sexual and gender minority youth. I hope that with the aid of this novel research tool, in the long run, we can help LGBTI+ young people to become more resilient and flourish.

Aoife Gavin, Senior Researcher

What research interests were you pursuing in 2020?

At the beginning of the year, we launched the National Health Behaviour in School-aged Children report and began a year of related Knowledge Translation activities. This included working on publications, infographics and working with the media and health-related NGOs.

I spent the majority of 2020 leading on a forthcoming Department of Health publication on trends in health outcomes, health behaviours and the social contexts of children's lives between 1998 and 2018. The report contains data from 62,720 school-aged children aged 10-17 years across the Republic of Ireland. Trends are presented by sex, age-groups and social classes, and provide clarity on the changes over time in youth health in Ireland.



The report also includes the relative standing of Ireland compared to 26 other countries for each of the six time points between 1998 and 2018.

I continued to pursue interests in childhood disability and chronic illness with international colleagues and we have been preparing manuscripts and giving conference presentations on our work.

What are your research plans for 2021 and beyond?

I look forward to further Knowledge Translation work, including the development of data visuals to facilitate access to the patterns in our datasets. This will ensure that the data is available to all stakeholders and can help to improve the lives of children in Ireland. I will also be conducting pilot tests on new variables and areas of interest for HBSC Ireland 2022.

Diabetic Foot Disease: from PRevention to treatment to Improved patient Outcomes (DFD PRIMO)



Principal Investigator: Professor Timothy O'Brien

Co-Investigators: Professor Georgina Gethin, Professor Caroline McIntosh, Dr Jane Sixsmith, Professor Brian McGuire, Professor Sean Dinneen, Professor James O'Gara, Professor Paddy Gillespie, Dr Gerard O'Connor

Funder: Health Research Board - The Collaborative Doctoral Awards in Patient-focused Research

The Health Research Board Collaborative Doctoral Awards scheme aims to support high quality doctoral training programmes for a cohort of individuals in the conduct of patient-focused research for improved patient health outcomes. The DFD PRIMO project aims to enhance patient care for those with diabetic foot disease (DFD) and train a cohort of inter-disciplinary students to PhD level for a career focus on translational health, through seven independent yet inter-related doctoral research projects. The doctoral programme is structured with students attending taught modules from the HRB SPHeRe programme as an integral part of the training as well as undertaking a supervised doctoral research project.

Patients with DFD and unmet health literacy needs, which comprises 40% of the Irish population (Sorensen et al., 2015), are severely compromised in their capacity to successfully self-manage their condition (Margolis et al., 2015). Health professionals are in a unique position to mitigate the negative effects of limited health literacy in patients with type 2 diabetes. The aim of the doctoral study in the Discipline of Health Promotion is to address how health professionals' health literacy competencies can be developed to facilitate successful self-management by patients with diabetes in the primary and secondary prevention of diabetic foot disease.

Aims

- To develop a coherent doctoral programme of patient-focused research in the thematic area of DFD that will bring tangible benefits and impacts to patient populations and health.
- To build capacity and expertise amongst health care professionals (HCPs) particularly in underrepresented health-related disciplines (e.g. podiatric medicine and nursing) thus increasing the number of highly skilled, future research leaders.
- To support cross-disciplinary research of high quality that will positively impact on public health and policy and allow for rapid application and translation of evidence into clinical practice.

Design and methods

The Health Promotion doctoral research will be undertaken in three phases using a sequential mixed methods design. Phase 1 comprises a literature review to inform modelling of an intervention. Phase 2 incorporates a qualitative approach to ascertain health professionals' perspectives on interpersonal communication strategies and a deliberative workshop with podiatric clinic users and carers. The results of Phases 1 and 2 will be integrated within the context of an appropriate theoretical framework that examines core concepts of tailored interpersonal communication strategies to enable modelling of an intervention for practice. A prototype intervention will be developed. In Phase 3 the prototype intervention will undergo a feasibility assessment with health professionals.

Patient Public Involvement

Phase 2 of the doctoral research design includes a deliberative workshop with patients, their carers and health professionals (<https://www.involve.org.uk/resources/methods/deliberative-workshop>).

Results

The Doctoral student has been recruited for the doctoral project and has commenced the structured population and health services research education (SPHeRe) programme.

Rapid evidence reviews on improving heart health outcomes in low-income communities and among low-income workers

Principal Investigators: Professor Saoirse Nic Gabhainn and Dr Colette Kelly

Researchers: Dr Elena Vaughan and Ms Divya Ravikumar

Funder: Irish Heart Foundation

The Health Programmes of the Irish Heart Foundation (IHF) take a settings approach to health promotion with a focus on three settings – communities, schools and workplaces. The IHF recognise and target health inequities that currently exist within Irish communities and society. This rapid evidence review was commissioned by the IHF, within the context of the necessary strategic review of their activity in Summer 2020. The purpose of this review was to assist in the identification of promising interventions to increase two of the key protective factors for heart disease – healthy eating and physical activity – in the workplace and community settings.

Aim and objectives

To identify, analyse and document the most promising and cost-effective interventions to increase healthy eating and physical activities in a) workplace settings with low-income workers, and b) low-income communities.

Design and methods

These reviews included empirical peer-reviewed journal articles published after 2010 that explored the promotion of physical activity or healthy eating in workplace settings and community settings. All included studies included a follow-up period of at least 12 months and provided details on behavioural outcomes. Only English language studies were included and studies were limited to those from Europe, North America and Oceania. Studies with any research design were included.

Findings

The review of workplace setting interventions for low-income workers showed that very few such studies have been carried out, with only three studies meeting inclusion criteria. None of these studies reported positive findings. The results suggest that there are significant gaps in knowledge around the usefulness, efficacy, and cost-effectiveness of implementing health promoting policies in low-income workplace settings.

The review of healthy eating and physical activity interventions in low-income communities returned 24 articles in total. Twenty-one of the 24 included were drawn from English-speaking countries with two from the Netherlands and one from France. Interventions were carried out across a variety of settings, including those integrated into existing health and social services and in diverse locations such as food banks and churches. Results were mixed, with five articles reporting no improvements in either healthy eating or physical activity; eight articles reporting improvements in both healthy eating and physical activity; two reporting improvements in physical activity; and nine reporting improvements in healthy eating only. Women were disproportionately represented in these studies. The results suggest that interventions aimed at low-income populations are most effective when carried out in locations convenient to the target population. Future studies would benefit from adopting innovative approaches to recruitment in order to increase participation from male participants and those most at risk.

Dissemination

Two reports on the conducted reviews were supplied to the Irish Heart Foundation and are not publicly available. A journal article based on the community setting review is in preparation.

Knowledge Translation

These reviews were commissioned by the Irish Heart Foundation explicitly to inform their strategic review process in 2020. The findings of the reviews had a specific impact on the decisions made by the Foundation during their strategic review.



Progressing action on effective ways of developing health literate organisations

Principal Investigators: Dr Jane Sixsmith and Dr Verna McKenna

Workplacement Students: Ms Miriam O Byrne and Dr Zsófia Torok

Background

The road map from the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe for the implementation of health literacy initiatives (WHO, 2019) explicitly identifies the need to document and evaluate activities that integrate health literacy into real-world organisational practice to progress action on their health literacy responsiveness. A body of work is being undertaken in an Irish healthcare setting on activities carried out in partnership between academia, health service staff and with patient participation, to develop a health literate organisation. The work has progressed from an initial organisational needs assessment comprising an audit with action planning facilitated by a logic model, to the implementation of a range of activities, such as the development of policy with scaling out through the process (eg. Health Service Executive, 2017). A systems approach to research design in the context of patient safety and continual quality improvement is being explored.

Aim

To progress action on effective ways of developing health literate organisations.

Design and methods

Mixed methods are used to evaluate the work of the committee and activities developed and implemented tailored to the specific activity undertaken.

Patient Public Involvement

The Health Literacy Committee includes the participation of all stakeholders to direct and develop the work undertaken including, administrative, nursing and medical staff, academics and patients. Inclusive participatory approaches are used in research undertaken.

Results

In 2020 a review of the initial logic model developed was undertaken with most activities identified as complete. Through this process it was identified that the ratified written information policy with associated resources was due to be updated. A review process of the policy commenced with students of the MA in Health Promotion through an inclusive participatory research programme.

Knowledge Translation

Activities undertaken are identified as a need by the organisation and / or the health literacy committee, discussed and interventions planned.

Dissemination

A member of the organisation communication team is on the health literacy committee and facilitates the dissemination of activities undertaken.

Sixsmith, J. & McKenna, V. (2020). Progressing Action on Effective Ways of Developing Health Literate Organisations. A Briefing Paper. Submitted to WHO Geneva.

Positive Mental Health: Promotion of wellbeing and flourishing in the European youth sector

Principle Investigator: Professor Margaret Barry

Researcher: Dr Tuuli Kuosmanen

Funder: EU ERASMUS+

Partners: NUI Galway (Ireland), Anatta Foundation (Netherlands), Euroaccion (Spain), creACTIVE (North Macedonia), Vice Versa (Czech Republic) and Kamaleonte ASD (Italy)

This project concerns the promotion of positive mental health for young people (16-25 years), which is one of the main pillars of the European Youth Strategy and a stated Youth Goal arising from the European Youth Forum. Working in collaboration with project partners in Europe and the youth work sector in Ireland, this project will provide a working model and training that can be used by youth workers and organisations in promoting youth mental health and wellbeing. The main responsibility of the Research Partner (HPRC) is the development of a theoretical evidence-based framework that will form the basis for the development of a practical manual with a range of strategies that can be used by youth workers and organisations in promoting young people's mental health.

Aims and Objectives

The project aims to promote positive mental health practices in youth work settings by developing a framework, practical tools and pilot training for promoting the mental health and wellbeing of young people (16 - 25 years). The objectives are:

- To develop a framework for youth workers and trainers in promoting positive mental health and wellbeing among young people.
- To compile a toolkit based on the framework and existing evidence-based practice for promoting positive mental health in youth settings.
- To provide training for youth workers in applying the framework and toolkit in practice.

Methods

The theoretical framework was developed based on a review of existing frameworks for promoting mental health in youth settings and the evidence base on the effectiveness of youth mental health promotion interventions. Furthermore, input from the project partners and from practitioners in Ireland was sought to ensure the relevance and usability of the framework. Based on the framework report, a Practice Brief has been developed for use by practitioners.

Knowledge Translation

The National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) is collaborating on this project, including participation in international training events. NYCI will assist in disseminating the project outputs to key stakeholders at the regional and local levels. A National Multiplier Event was held virtually to distribute project findings and to gain feedback from national stakeholders on the developed framework. Irish youth workers will also participate in international online training for promoting positive mental health in the youth sector. On a European level, the project results are accessible through the project website (www.positivementalhealth.eu) and through the information channels of the partner organisations. The project is due to finish in 2021 and outputs will be translated into the languages of the partner organisations. Project outputs will also be made available through an academic paper.

Publications

Kuosmanen, T., Dowling, K. and Barry, M.M., (2020). *A Framework for Promoting Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing in the European Youth Sector*. A report produced as part of the Erasmus+ Project: Promoting positive mental health in the European Youth sector. World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Health Promotion Research, National University of Ireland Galway.

Kuosmanen, T., Dowling, K. and Barry, M.M., (2020). *Practice Brief: A Framework for Promoting Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing in the European Youth Sector*. A Practice Brief produced as part of the Erasmus+ Project: Promoting positive mental health in the European Youth sector. World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Health Promotion Research, National University of Ireland Galway. www.nuigalway.ie/hprc



IMproving PATient Centered Communication Competences: To build professional capacity regarding health literacy in medical and nursing education

Principal Investigators: Dr Jane Sixsmith and Dr Verna McKenna

Researcher: Ms Leonie Sherlock and Ms Ailish Kelly

Funder: EU Erasmus+



Health Literacy is recognised as a critical determinant of health. IMPACCT (IMproving PATient Centered Communication Competences: To build professional capacity regarding health literacy in medical and nursing education) aims to contribute to the development of health literacy responsive health systems in order to mitigate the negative health outcomes associated with unmet health literacy needs. The project focus is on health professionals capacity development through inclusion of health literacy in undergraduate health professional education. A comprehensive flexible health literacy (HL) focused Patient-centred Communication Education Programme (HL- EP) has been developed, implemented and evaluated and is in the process of dissemination. The programme, aligned with The Bologna Process, comprises 17 learning units incorporating a range of educational materials that can be used either as a whole or in a flexible ‘pick and mix’ format to facilitate inclusion in current healthcare professional undergraduate curricula. In addition, an introductory Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) about working with patients with limited health literacy has been developed. A complementary project INCLUDE4HEALTH has developed a second MOOC about organisational health literacy with funding from EIT Health.

Aim and objectives

IMPACCT has as its overall aim to improve the relevance and quality of education for undergraduate medical and nursing students in Europe.

Objectives include to:

- facilitate the involvement of relevant European stakeholders to strengthen co-creation throughout the project and promote integration of HL-EP in curricula.
- develop a comprehensive framework for HL-EP.
- develop health literacy Learning Units to promote development of HL knowledge and skills.
- implement HL-EP in 8 pilot sites in 4 countries and to assess the impact of the Learning Units on the development of competencies of medical and nursing students, and adapt the HL-EP based on the results.
- describe quality standards and provide guidance for educational professionals in supporting sustainable change.

Design and methods

A dynamic process of development of the HL-EP through formative, process and outcome evaluation has been undertaken using mixed methods incorporating a core design component of co-creation with stakeholders at all stages. A suite of 17 Learning Units have been developed with peer evaluation of all 17 and adaptations made. A Health Literacy MOOC (Massive Online Open Course) has been developed, implemented and is in the process of evaluation.

Public Patient Involvement

Stakeholders are engaged through a stakeholder fora in each of the 5 partner countries comprising in total about 500 participants. Stakeholder fora form a participant sample panel for research activities. Stakeholders active participation has strengthened co-creation during all stages of IMPACCT and they promote integration of the health literacy educational programme in curricula.



Who they are

Local Stakeholder Fora (LSF) are composed of about 100 stakeholders per country (500 stakeholders total), and include: educational professionals, medical and nursing students, policy-makers, older adults, members of patient organizations and health professionals.



Results

Activities in 2020 have focused on completion of the learning units with adaptations to materials following evaluation. Components of a learning unit were, for a third year, integrated into a communications module and completed by 100 first year nursing students. One MOOC was completed, implemented and evaluated with positive feedback received.

Knowledge Translation

Through the project design with the involvement of the stakeholder fora in each partner country at every stage, the project learning units and / or components have been incorporated into undergraduate health professional education. In Ireland learning unit components are again integrated in a communication module undertaken by 100 students, in an undergraduate nursing curriculum in 2020.

Dissemination

The Joint Statement of the EU Health Policy Platform has identified the IMPACCT project as best practice across Europe for innovation readiness, digital skills and literacy. This recognised the IMPACCT project for evidence-based health educational programmes to improve medical and nursing student's education (See: <https://inhwe.org/sites/default/files/documents/HPP%20Joint%20Statement%20-%20Final.pdf>)

IMPACCT Consortium. (2020). Enhancing Health Literacy competences for the future healthcare workforce. Policy Brief.

IMPACCT Consortium. (2020). Enhancing Health Literacy competences for the future healthcare workforce. Brochure. Available 2021 on <http://healthliteracycentre.eu/impacct/what-is-impacct/>

IMPACCT Consortium. (2020). Enhancing Health Literacy competences for the future healthcare workforce. Manual. Available 2021 on <http://healthliteracycentre.eu/impacct/what-is-impacct/>

IMPACCT Consortium. (2020). Working with Patients with Limited Health Literacy. Massive Open Online Course (September 2020) FutureLearn Platform <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/working-health-literacy>

McKenna, VB & Sixsmith, J. (2020) Health literacy-an integral component of health professional education. Invited presentation to *Progressive Alliance of Clinical Educators (PACE) seminar*, June 9. College of Medicine Nursing and Health Sciences, National University of Ireland Galway.

Details of IMPACCT feature on the Health Literacy Centre Europe webpage with links to the project, blog posts and newsletters <http://healthliteracycentre.eu/>

A social media LinkedIn group: IMPACCT project (Improving Patient-centered Communication Competencies) and a short video trailer introducing the project have also been disseminated.

All can be accessed at <http://healthliteracycentre.eu/impacct/impacct-communication-channels>

Family caregivers' support – strategies and tools to promote caregivers' mental and emotional health

Lead Principal Investigator: Dr Wolfgang Eisenreich, ECC, Austria

Principal Investigators: Professor Tanja Franciskovic, MEDRI, Croatia; Ms Sonja Bercko Eisenreich, INTEGRA, Slovenia; Dr Jana Butekova, Ms Alena Voaljaskova, QUALED, Slovakia; Ms Panayiota Constanti, Centre for Social Innovation LTD, Cyprus; Dr Martin Power, Ms Lhara Mullins, HPRC NUI Galway, Ireland; Professor Regina Silva, Instituto Politecnico do Porto, Portugal; Dr Mario Campanino, IUL, Italy

Funder: Erasmus+

Across Europe family and informal caregivers provide an often unseen backbone of support to acute and formal health and care systems. Family and informal caregivers make an unparalleled contribution to supporting independence, autonomy and quality of life for those they care for, often allowing care receivers to remain included in their communities and societies and to age in place. While caring can be hugely rewarding, it also presents many challenges. Carers are regularly 'always on' and opportunities for respite may be limited, especially in light of the ongoing pandemic. Caring can thus take a physical, mental and emotional toll on family and informal caregivers.

The Family Caregivers' Support project has developed a resource pack, which is divided into modules that cover dementia, substance abuse, schizophrenia, common mood disorders, intellectual disability, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism, eating disorders and post-traumatic stress disorder. Each module provides information around the condition/disorder and common concerns that caregivers can have, as well as activities for both the caregiver and care receiver, which can assist them in managing the situation. In addition, the Family Caregivers Guidelines provide further information on each of the conditions/disorders and details such things as behaviours to expect, case studies, advice and recommendations on strategies and responses, and self-care activities for caregivers to support them in negotiating the mental and emotional challenges.

The project materials are available online (www.family-caregiver-support.eu/) and through a mobile application for both Android and iOS devices, to facilitate free access and availability. The materials are available in the languages of the project partners - English, German, Portuguese, Italian, Croatian, Slovenian, Greek and Slovakian, as well as in Arabic and Pashto. The Family Caregivers Support website also contains a forum for caregivers to interact and has available dissemination materials in the form of flyers and newsletters.

In each of the project partner countries, family and informal caregivers reviewed both the materials and platform and provided feedback to the project consortium. This feedback was incorporated and facilitated refinement of the materials and platform before release of the final versions of the resource pack and guidelines. As with many other events, the project was impacted substantially by the ongoing pandemic and dissemination events and project meetings were held online.

Resource Pack: <https://developfc.csicy.com/english/>

Guidelines: <https://www.family-caregiver-support.eu/overview-results/>

Mobile App: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.something.FamilyCaregiverSupport>

Below: Final Family Caregivers Support project meeting, which was conducted online due to the pandemic.



Collaborative Activities

Worldwide Collaborations

Our collaborations span many countries, regions and cities in the world. This map is an illustration of how diverse our networks and reach is across the globe. Details of the organisation or institute with which we collaborate can be found under the small globes.



Canada:

Stigma and Resilience Among Vulnerable Youth Centre (SARAVYC); University of British Columbia; Queen's University; International Union for Health Promotion and Education Université de Montréal, Quebec



South America:

No collaboration at present.



Europe:

Armenia: Arabkir Medical Centre-Institute of Child and Adolescent Health

Austria: ECC Austria

Belgium: Universite Libre de Bruxelles; European Association of Institutions in Higher Education; European Health Management Association

Croatia: MEDRI Rijeka

Cyprus: Centre for Social Innovation LTD; Cyprus Pedagogical Institute

Czech Republic: Vice Versa; OUSHI - Palacký University

Denmark: University of Copenhagen; WHO Regional Office for Europe

Finland: Turku AMK

France: Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sante Publique (EHESP)

Germany: DHBW; Wohlfahrtswerk Fur-Baden Wurttemberg; University of Bielefeld; University of Applied Sciences, Fulda; University Halle-Wittenberg; Jacobs University Bremen

Greece: Chaledu; Frodizo

Hungary: ELTE Eötvös Loránd University

Italy: IUL; ISRAA; Kamaleonte ASD; University of Padova; The Regional Agency for Health, Marche region (ARS)

North Africa:

United Republic of Tanzania; Muhimbili University Health Science (MUHAS); Catholic University Health Sciences (CUHAS); Kilimanjaro Catholic Medical College (KMCCo); Ministry of Health; African Institute for Health Development, Nairobi, Kenya



Africa:

University of Limpopo, South Africa; Midlands State University, Zimbabwe; University of Zambia, Zambia; University of Ibadan, Nigeria

Saudia Arabia:

Health Holding Company, Ministry of Health



India:

Voluntary Health Association of India, New Delhi

Australia:

Western Sydney University
University of New England



Latvia: Riga Stradinxs University

Luxembourg: University of Luxembourg

Macedonia: creACTIVE

Norway: University of South-Eastern Norway (USN); Norwegian Institute of Public Health; University Hospital North Norway Trust [Norwegian Centre for E-health research]

Poland: SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities [CARE-BEH Center for Applied Research on Health Behavior and Health];

Portugal: Instituto Politecnico do Porto; University of Lisbon

Romania: Babes-Bolyai University

Slovakia: QUALED; Pavol Jozef Šafárik University (UPJS), Košice

Slovenia: INTEGRA

Spain: University of Seville; Euroaccion

Switzerland: Lucerne University of Applied Arts and Sciences; Health Promotion, WHO Headquarters

The Netherlands: The Anatta Foundation; Utrecht University; University Medical Centre Groningen (UMCG); The University of Groningen (RUG); Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen

Ukraine: Ukrainian Institute for Social Research

United Kingdom: Cardiff University; University of Glasgow; University of the Highlands and Islands; Queens University Belfast

Visitors

We welcome academics, researchers and visitors from other academic institutions who wish to work with our staff members or on research projects as we consider this an important element of our community exchange and networking. The global pandemic disrupted these activities due to the closure of access to academic buildings as staff were requested to work from home. During the early part of 2020 we had the following academics and work placement students working with our research leaders:

- Dr Yousef Al Balawi, Consultant at the Health Holding Company, Ministry of Health, Saudi Arabia, undertook a Postdoctoral Health Promotion Research Fellowship in the HPRC under the supervision of Dr Jane Sixsmith (February 2019-February 2020).
- Esther Ciria-Barreiro, University of Seville (Dec 2020).
- Sinead Costello, Athlone Institute of Technology, work placement (Jan – April 2020).
- Caroline Grogan, Children’s Studies, NUI Galway work placement (Jan – April 2020).
- Siofra Kilgallon, Sligo Institute of Technology, work placement (Jan – May 2020).
- Julia MacAulay, 3rd year Medical student, NUI Galway (Sep – Dec 2020)
- Eva O’Callaghan, Children’s Studies, NUI Galway work placement (Jan - Feb 2020).
- Tansey Ryan, Galway Mayo Institute of Technology, work placement (Jan – March 2020).

2020 Conference Report



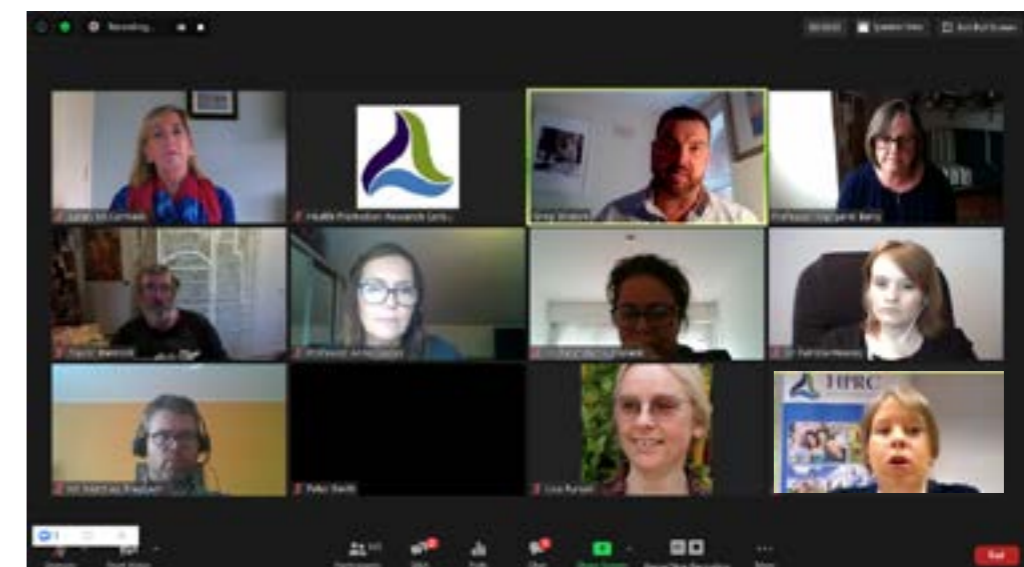
In association with our partners, Healthy Ireland, the Health Service Executive and the Association for Health Promotion Ireland, we were delighted to invite our 294 delegates, across 15 countries, to our 24th Annual Health Promotion Conference on June 18th 2020. This year’s focus was on promoting health and wellbeing in order to create a more equitable and sustainable environment.

In response to the risks and travel restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic we transitioned this conference to a fully digital online format. This move was also timely and apt as it complemented the conference sustainability theme through decreased collective consumption while maintaining a sense of open discourse and networking opportunities.

The conference themes on ecological determinants of health and wellbeing, environmental sustainability and social justice and equity are of the utmost importance for global health and wellbeing and there is now a more pressing need for research in these areas to inform policy and action. We were therefore delighted that researchers, practitioners and policymakers involved in related areas of work joined us to explore these themes and issues further.

Oral and poster presentations are available to view on the [conference 2020 presentation channel](#).

The Conference Co-Chairs were Dr Mary Jo Lavelle and Dr Lisa Pursell, HPRC, NUI Galway who were supported by our external committee members: Sarah McCormack, Health and Wellbeing, Health Service Executive; Cathryn Buckley, National Health Sustainability Office, Health Service Executive; Dr Patricia Heavey, Association for Health Promotion Ireland; Greg Straton, Health and Wellbeing Programme, Department of Health. We gratefully acknowledge the funding provided by our external partners and by NUI Galway to celebrate Galway’s designation as European Capital of Culture.



People-Planet-Health

The People-Planet-Health project is led by the International Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE), Lucerne University of Applied Arts and Sciences, the University of Nottingham and National University of Ireland Galway, and supported by the ITC-program of Lucerne University of Applied Arts and Sciences. This project was initiated by Professor Claudia Meier Magistretti in collaboration with Dr Jake Sallaway-Costello and Professor Margaret Barry, with the aim of giving voice and visibility to young people and civil groups undertaking grassroots activism for planetary health.

Further project details may be found at: <https://www.people-planet-health.com/home>



COVID-19 Response for the African Region

This project is led by the IUHPE in collaboration with partners in the African region. This initiative is concerned with implementing community-based health promotion approaches, based on effective health communication and community empowerment strategies, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic at a community level in selected African countries. Working with the most disadvantaged communities, country partners and networks have been mobilized in implementing a range of community-based strategies, empowering local communities in taking effective action. With funding from Vital Strategies, this work is being led by Dr. Mary Amuyunzu-Nyamongo (Kenya), Professor Hans Onya (South Africa), Professor Davison Munodawafa (Zimbabwe), and Professor Oliver Mweemba (Zambia). Professor Margaret Barry, in her role as Global President of IUHPE, chairs the Project Management Group for this project.

CHERIsH

Dr Colette Kelly is a collaborator on the Choosing Healthy Eating for Infant Health (CHERIsH) study, which is a multi-disciplinary, cross-institutional project that aimed to develop, implement and evaluate an intervention to support and promote healthy infant feeding practices among parents and primary caregivers within primary care settings. The project ran from 2016-2020 and was funded by the Health Research Board Interdisciplinary Capacity Enhancement Awards (ICE). Over the project period Colette contributed to a number of systematic reviews, the development of core outcome sets for childhood obesity and to the protocols for intervention development. CHERIsH consisted of a multi-disciplinary, cross-institutional team from University College Cork, Trinity College Dublin and NUI Galway.

Health Promoting Actions on Campus: Demonstration Project

This collaborative project between Professor Saoirse Nic Gabhainn and Dr Colette Kelly, HPRC and Student Services, NUI Galway with researcher Ms Aisling Harrington builds on the Healthy Campus conceptual framework of Healthy Ireland and the work of Student Services in NUI Galway.

Aim and Objectives: To develop the Health Promotion Function within Student Services, NUI Galway through the provision of Health Promotion Services, Consultancy and Advocacy.

Design/Methods: This project involves the identification of Health Promotion needs; implementation of Health Promotion actions; and assessment of the impact.

CARA Connect Programme: This was developed with the aim to support the power of conversation and connection and to combat the isolation and loneliness reported by students. A peer buddy system was developed, where students were matched together for safe socially distant activities. This helped the participants to increase social interactions and form new friendships with other students and their peers.

Holiday Hangout: In collaboration with the International Office, the CARA Connect Initiative was adapted to support those students that stayed in Galway for the holiday period for various reasons.

COVID 19 Conversation Series: This was a virtual chat room and safe space for all students, held weekly with guest contributors, and enabled students to express their opinions around the ongoing pandemic.

All in this Together Photo Competition: working across several units on campus, with funding from the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion fund, this aimed to raise awareness of the International Day of People with Disability (IDPWD). Photographs had to be inspired by the Sustainable Development Goals in particular Goal 3 – Good Health and Wellbeing and Goal 10 - Reducing Inequalities.

Public Patient Involvement: Students and staff are actively involved in all elements of this project: determining needs, processes, advocacy and evaluation.

Knowledge Translation: This project is a deliberative initiative to translate Health Promotion knowledge into practice within NUI Galway. Learnings from the project will be used to help guide and inform action on campus in NUI Galway and other third level institutions.

Research Students

Knowledge Network

The Knowledge Network for Health Promotion was created in 2008 by the HPRC in partnership with the Health Promotion Unit, HSE West to develop links between the organisations and to share knowledge and expertise. The Network acts as a platform for exchange of information for health promotion developments in research, education and practice, including research funding opportunities and identification of available resources. In 2020 membership included, Jane Sixsmith, Verna McKenna, NUI Galway; Evelyn Fanning, Fiona Falvey, Carol Farrell, Laura McHugh, Fiona Donovan, Ross Cullen, Antoinette Morley; Health Service Executive; and Irene Gibson, Croí. The Covid-19 pandemic resulted in limited activities in 2020 with meetings postponed. We plan to explore mechanisms for information exchange in 2021.

MoBaKunder project

The Impact of Quality in Kindergarten for Better Mental Health in Children: A Norwegian Survey-Registry Linkage Study. Professor Margaret Barry is an external adviser on this research project, which is funded the Norwegian Research Council (2018-2021) and led by the Director of the Department of Health Promotion at the Norwegian Institute of Public Health, Dr Leif Aarø, in collaboration with PI of the SOL-study, Dr Mari Vaage Wang (NIPH).

PhD Graduates 2020

Dr Barbara Battel-Kirk

An evaluation of the use and impact of Health Promotion competencies in Europe



While competency-based approaches have been developed in Health Promotion over the past three decades there has been limited focus on the evaluation of their use and impact. Five years after publication of the CompHP Core Competencies Framework for Health Promotion a study was initiated with the aim of evaluating its use and impact on Health Promotion practice, education and training in Europe.

A scoping review of the literature on Health Promotion competencies was followed by a two-phase mixed-methods study comprising an online survey and a single case study with two embedded units of analysis, namely the countries of Ireland and Italy.

Current Health Promotion competency frameworks and factors that were perceived as influencing their uptake and use were identified in the literature review which provided a context for the investigative phases of the study.

There was a total of 81 responses to the online survey. Despite generally positive attitudes and high levels of reported Health Promotion capacity just over half of respondents (54%) reported that they had used the competencies in their practice and 53% that they were used in their country. Expectations that levels of resources, support and attitudes would influence the use of the competencies were generally met. A reported lack of support for, and formal recognition of, the competencies by key stakeholders emerged as a potentially critical factor influencing their uptake.

A total of 26 interviews were completed in the case study (13 in each country). The focus and rate of progress of implementing the competencies was found to differ across the two countries, reflecting their levels of Health Promotion infrastructure and capacity. A lack of awareness of the competencies was identified as a major limiting factor to implementation in both countries, of particular concern in relation to key stakeholders.

The findings of the study overall, while limited by a low response rate in the online survey, provide important insights into the use and impact of the competencies on Health Promotion practice, education and training in Europe, together with in-depth analysis of the factors influencing their implementation at individual practitioner and country levels. Findings regarding a lack of awareness of the competencies at all levels, and perceptions that their implementation is not supported by key stakeholders, highlight the importance of advocacy, dissemination and marketing to ensure future implementation. The findings provide useful insights for future implementation and begin to address the gap in empirical evidence on the use and impact of Health Promotion competencies, while indicating the need for further research.

PhD Supervisor: Professor Margaret Barry

[Dr Lorraine Burke](#)

The context and circumstances of early sexual initiation among adolescents in Ireland: A mixed methods investigation.



Adolescents who initiate sexual intercourse at early ages may be at a heightened risk of negative sexual health outcomes at the time of first sex and later in life. In the case of Ireland, there is inadequate knowledge about the specific correlates of early sexual initiation among adolescents. Underpinned by Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Theory of Human Development, early sexual initiation and the relationship between contextual socio-demographic, health and lifestyle factors, and the timing of first sexual intercourse is explored. The study employed an explanatory sequential design and analysed data from sexually active 15-17 year olds collected through the Irish 2014 Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC) study.

Socio-demographic and lifestyle factors were a stronger predictor of age of sexual initiation for girls than boys, which was also associated with early risk behaviour initiation. Family support and number of male friends were significant predictors among boys only. Reporting the use of alcohol or experience of being drunk, and unhealthy food consumption were significant factors for girls only.

Of the nationally representative sample, 37.4% of boys and 26.5% of girls reported initiating sexual intercourse before the age of 15 years, and they were significantly more likely to have an older partner and less likely to have used condoms at the time of first sex compared to those who initiated at older ages. Early initiators were also less likely to be happy with the timing of first intercourse,

Qualitative workshops collated feedback and perspectives from adolescents on the quantitative findings. Through the process of thematic analysis four main themes were identified: decision-making, power imbalances, social judgement and adolescents' recommendations, with substantial variation across boys and girls.

This study provides an insight into the specific contexts and circumstances associated with early sexual initiation and revealed clear gender differences in both the factors and behaviours related to the timing of first sexual intercourse as well how this is experienced. It emphasises the need for holistic as well as targeted approaches to sexual health promotion. Adolescent sexual health is socially and politically relevant in Ireland at this time as an update of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) has been mandated. These findings can feed into curricula to equip adolescents with the skills and competence to successfully navigate sexual situations socially, emotionally and physically.

PhD supervisors: Dr Colette Kelly and Professor Saoirse Nic Gabhainn

[Dr Katherine Dowling](#)

Evaluating the Implementation of the MindOut Social and Emotional Wellbeing Programme in Irish Post-Primary Schools



The overarching aim of this thesis was to evaluate the implementation of the MindOut social and emotional learning (SEL) programme with disadvantaged post-primary school students (15-18 years old) in Ireland. This study was conducted in three phases, each of which have been published. *Phase 1* aimed to evaluate the immediate impact of the MindOut programme on students' social emotional skills, mental health and wellbeing and academic outcomes. *Phase 2* aimed to examine variability in implementation quality and to identify factors that contributed to this variability. *Phase 3* aimed to determine how implementation quality impacted on programme outcomes.

The study employed a cluster-randomised controlled design with mixed methods approach. A total of 675 students from 32 disadvantaged schools participated at baseline and data were collected from students and teachers before, during and following programme delivery. *Phase 1* employed linear mixed models (LMM) to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme on students' outcomes. *Phase 2* used process measures to determine schools' level of implementation quality across four implementation dimensions, and to identify factors that contributed to implementation quality. *Phase 3* employed LMM's to assess the relationships between the implementation data and outcome data across three time-points and between three treatment groups (high-implementation, low-implementation and control).

Phase 1 demonstrated significant improvements in students' social and emotional skills: reduced suppression of emotions ($p=0.035$), use of more positive coping strategies [reduced avoidance coping $p<0.001$] and increased social support coping ($p=0.044$)] and mental health and wellbeing: reduced levels of stress ($p=0.017$) and depressive symptoms ($p=0.030$) and reduced anxiety scores for female students ($p=0.044$). *Phase 2* detected variability in implementation quality between schools and assigned eight schools to both the high- and low-implementation groups. Influencing factors were categorised into five themes: Programme Factors, Participant Factors, Teacher Factors, School Contextual Factors and Organisational Capacity Factors. *Phase 3* revealed significant positive programme effects at post-intervention for the high-implementation group only (reduced suppression of emotions [$p=.049$]; reduced avoidance coping [$p=.006$]; increased social support coping [$p=.009$]; reduced levels of stress [$p=.035$] and depressive symptoms [$p=.025$]).

Overall, these findings demonstrate that the MindOut programme can be effective in producing positive outcomes for participants, particularly those students of disadvantaged status. However, these positive outcomes were only evident in schools that implemented the programme with high-quality, signifying the importance of implementation quality in the overall success of a programme. The findings from this study have clear implications for policy, practice and future research and highlight a number of important factors to enhance implementation quality and strengthen programme outcomes.

PhD Supervisor: Professor Margaret Barry

[Dr Helen Grealish](#)

How research impacts on health policy in Ireland: A case study of alcohol and drug policy



The goal of public health and health promotion practitioners is to increase the health of populations through evidence informed health policy. Similar to evidence-based medicine, public health advocates argue health policies based on scientific knowledge are ultimately better than those based on moral or ideological beliefs. Increasingly too in research proposals and in institutional research assessment exercises, academic researchers are being asked to provide evidence of the wider impacts of their work, outside of their field of academic pursuits. This study explored the utilisation of academic research by policymakers in the development of alcohol and drug policy in Ireland. In addition, it tested the practicality of using the Research Impact Framework (Kuruvilla et al., 2006) in examining how academic researchers think through the impact of their work.

A triangulation of methods was employed in this retrospective case study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants from the policymaking community, and with academic researchers from the fields of alcohol and drug research. This was complemented by the analysis of publicly available policy documents on drugs and alcohol.

The findings demonstrated that research evidence is only one type of knowledge used in public health policymaking. A complex array of other factors impact on policy, from the wider political and economic landscape to the personal beliefs and interest of policy actors. Researchers reported that good linkages between academic and government departments were important for the uptake of research. Policymakers described how researchers needed to increase their understanding of the policymaking process. Research evidence, framed and packaged in a way that was conscious of the contextual policy environment in which it would arrive, was more likely to have an impact. The Research Impact Framework (Kuruvilla et al., 2006) was found to be an appropriate and efficient tool in helping academics to identify the impacts of their work.

PhD supervisor: Professor Saoirse Nic Gabhainn

[Dr Verna McKenna](#)

Developments in health literacy over time: A longitudinal qualitative research study



Conceptualising health literacy as a relational concept, which involves how individuals interact with complex health and social systems, requires a greater understanding of the context of people's health experiences. The overall aim of this study was to examine how health literacy develops over time in the management of health and illness among a group of individuals attending a structured cardiovascular risk reduction programme. The study also examined the facilitators and barriers in that process.

The study used a longitudinal qualitative study design to address the study aims. A semi-structured interview guide, informed by Sørensen's conceptual model of health literacy, was used to explore the development of health literacy and to identify changes in knowledge, attitudes and experiences over time at three separate time points. The HLS-EU-Q47 was used to provide a guide on the health literacy level of participants at Phases 1 and 3 of the study. Twenty-six participants were purposefully selected from a cardiovascular risk reduction programme. Thematic analysis and longitudinal question interpretive and analytic frameworks were used in data analysis. Results from the study showed developments in health literacy across the functional, interactive and critical levels of health literacy. The health care provider provided a crucial role for individuals in the development of all aspects of health literacy capacities. While, in the main, individuals reported perceptions of increased feelings of empowerment and control related to managing health and illness, these developments could be adversely impacted by both psychological and structural barriers.

Positive developments in health literacy capacities are important for the self-management of health and illness. Longitudinal findings underscore the importance of healthcare providers in supporting the development of health literacy capacities. These findings lend support to the need to integrate health literacy into health care interventions and to incorporate health literacy into medical training and other curricula for health professionals.

PhD Supervisor: Professor Margaret Barry

Postgraduate Programmes in Health Promotion PhD & MPhil Students: New students 2020

Welcome to the four PhD students who started this year:



[Lauren Connell](#)

Developing Health Professionals health literacy competencies to support patients in diabetes self-management.

This programme aims to develop and assess the feasibility of an educational intervention to empower patients, at risk of diabetic foot ulceration occurrence or recurrence, to self-manage.

Supervisors: Dr Jane Sixsmith and Dr Yvonne Finn.

Exposure and experience with substance use among Irish young adults living short term in Massachusetts

I plan to investigate the perceptions of changes in illicit drug market due to COVID-19 and risk reduction strategies used among people who use drugs in Ireland to keep safe in response to these changes in supply. This research hopes to use qualitative methods to shed light on important issues surrounding drug use and overdose prevention today. It will explore concepts such as availability of drugs, presence of adulterants, incidents of overdose, and barriers to care among people who use drugs. Further, it will investigate how COVID-19 may have influenced the presence of synthetics in the illicit drug supply and the acceptability of using fentanyl test strips as a risk-reduction strategy among people who use drugs.

Supervisor: Professor Saoirse Nic Gabhainn



[Margaret Mc Loone](#)

An examination of the attitudes, perceptions and awareness of infant feeding practices amongst young people in Ireland

Breastfeeding can make a significant contribution to population health by improving health outcomes for both infant/child and mother. According to the Irish Maternity Indicator System (IMIS) breastfeeding was initiated with 63.8 per cent of infants born in Irish Maternity hospitals (IMIS, 2020). Breastfeeding rates decline rapidly and the Healthcare Pricing Office (2020) report that only 48.3 per cent of babies were still being breastfed at discharge from hospital. These breastfeeding rates lag significantly behind rates of breastfeeding globally. Promoting breastfeeding to young people is a challenging issue in our society where formula-feeding is an accepted norm. This study is examining the attitudes, perceptions and awareness of infant feeding practices amongst young people in Ireland.

Supervisors: Dr Colette Kelly and Professor Saoirse Nic Gabhainn

[Divya Ravikumar](#)

Food provision and the homeless population: working together to enable solutions

The study will address research gaps in the literature that were highlighted during a research project for the MA Health Promotion course. The first phase of this study is a systematic review examining food sources and donations in the homeless sector. The second phase of this PhD involves the co-production of food and nutrition guidelines with and for service providers that work with the homeless population. The third phase will assess the feasibility of these guidelines. Study outcomes will add to the evidence base and aim to improve policy and healthcare provision and further progress towards the goal of achieving health equity in this population.



PhD. Supervisors: Dr Colette Kelly and Professor Saoirse Nic Gabhainn

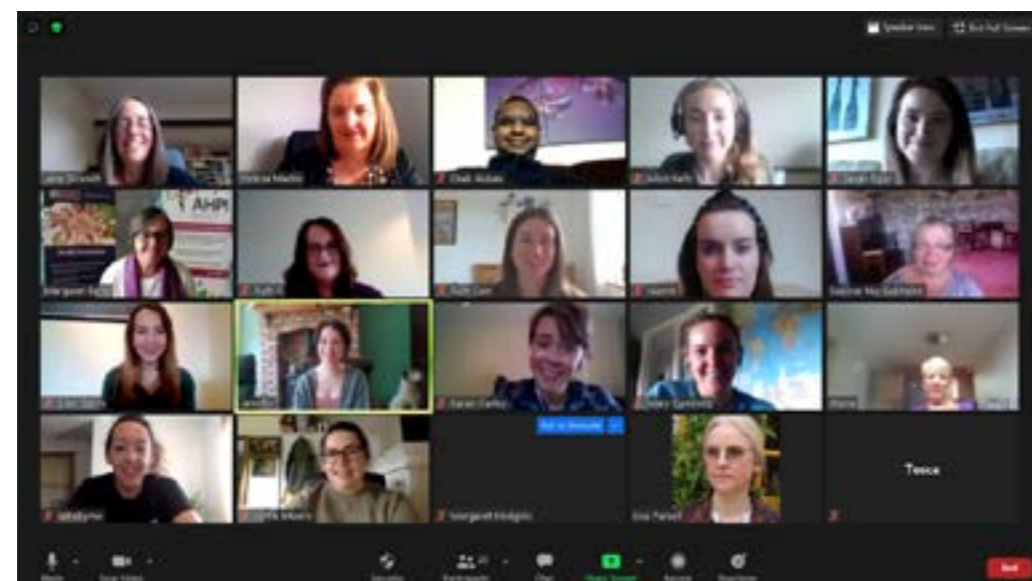
The full list of PhD and MPhil students are:

Hiyam Al-Riyami, Mary Callaghan, Lauren Connell, Ann Marie Crosse, Saintuya Dashdondog, Kathy Ann Fox, Aoife Gavin, Margaret Hester, Claire Kerins, Nurul Kodriati, Margaret McLoone, Teresa Meaney, Lhara Mullins, Áine O'Brien, Breda O'Mahony, Divya Ravikumar and Jaroslava Velartova.

Their thesis titles and descriptions are available at: <http://www.nuigalway.ie/medicine-nursing-and-health-sciences/health-sciences/researchstudents/>

Health Promotion Masters Dissertation List

Barry, Saoirse	Exploring the Effects of Mindfulness-Based Interventions on Health-Related Quality of Life in Chronic Pain Patients. A Scoping Review
Byrne, Katherine	A Scoping Review of Mental Health Promotion Interventions for Collective Trauma
Carr, Ruth	Health Inequalities in Irish Traveller Adolescents: Secondary Analysis of the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Study (HBSC) 2018 Data
Carter, Karen	An Exploration into the Workings of Successful Partnerships in the World Health Organization Healthy Cities Initiative? A Scoping Review
Coyle, Jennifer	The Moderating Effect of Family Support in the Association between Problematic Social Media Use and Life Satisfaction among Irish Adolescents. Secondary Analysis of the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Ireland 2018 Dataset
Cummins, Mary	How is Male Body Image Represented Through #fitspiration Content on Instagram?
Doherty, Aoife	A Scoping Literature Review of Community Development Programmes that Aim to Promote Men's Mental Health and the Effective Components of Engaging Men in Mental Health Programmes
Egan, Sarah	The Workplace as a Supportive Environment for Grieving Employees: A Scoping Review
Gavin, Ellen	Exploring the Role that Retirement Groups Play in Promoting Social Inclusion amongst Older People in Ireland and the United Kingdom
Gibney, Amy	A Scoping Review of Advocacy Models used to Promote Mental Health and Wellbeing within Mental Health Organisations – An International Perspective
Kane, Rhona	Nutrition Literacy in Older Age Adults - A Scoping Review of the Literature
Kelly, Ailish	Anti- vs Pro-Childhood Vaccination Tweets during the COVID-19 Pandemic: An Exploratory Study
Mannion, Niamh	Are Public Policies Improving School Food Environments?: A Scoping Review
Moore, Jamiene	What Interventions are there to Reduce Childhood Obesity in Low Socio-Economic Groups? A Scoping Review
Thompson-McNiece, Claudia	A Scoping Review of the Organisational Factors Influencing Burnout in Nursing Home Healthcare Assistants.



MA Health Promotion Students and Staff 2020

Disseminating Our Work

Snapshot of activities



10 current research projects

10 editorial boards



29 academic presentations

represented on 30 national boards & organisations



57 reports & publications

research collaborations with 62 international organisations



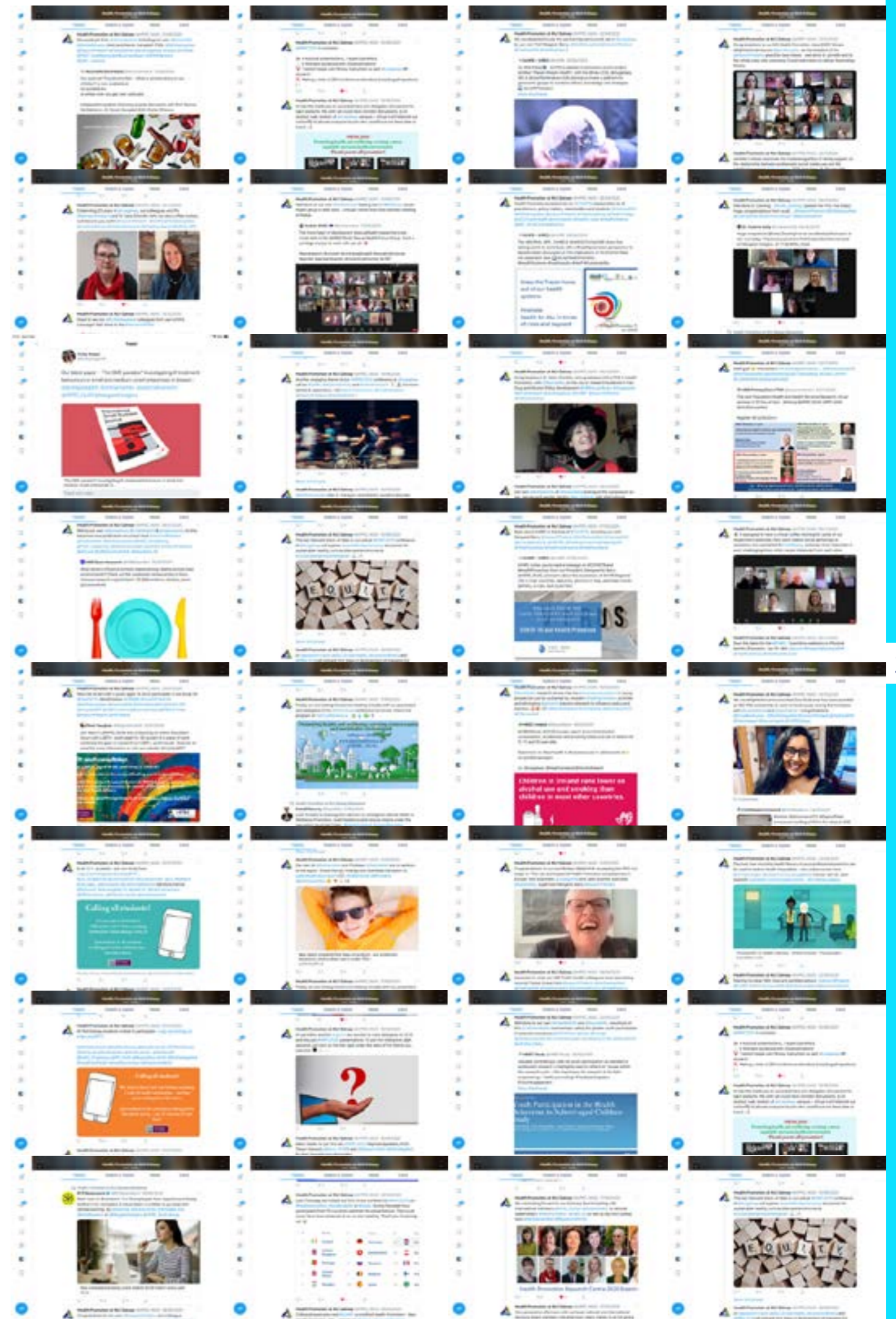
Social Media

We announce our events and publications to the wider community via twitter, and use the platform to celebrate our staff and students. Our @HPRC_NUIG twitter account gained 600 new followers in 2020, bringing us to 1,525 at the end of the year. In summary we posted 442 tweets, with 472.5K impressions and an engagement rate of 1.65%, considerably above the 2018 industry median of 0.046%. Our tweets resulted in 792 click links, 3,353 'likes' and 6,907 profile visits, while our account gathered a further 923 mentions.

The Chirpty.com graphic below illustrates our closest reciprocal links with multiple stakeholders, which include the Association of Health Promotion, Ireland, the International Union of Health Promotion and Education, WHO Regional Office for Europe, NUI Galway, the Institute of Public Health of Ireland, Healthy Ireland (Department of Health), the Health Service Executive, the National Institute for Prevention and Cardiovascular Health, Mental Health Ireland, the National Centre for Men's Health, the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children study, the Irish Medical Organisation and many graduates, collaborators and other peers.



This chirpty.com graphic illustrates our closest reciprocal links with multiple stakeholders



These images provide a snapshot of tweets posted in 2020.

Seminars



The Health Promotion Research Centre (HPRC) continued our collaboration with colleagues in the Health Behaviour Change Research Group, PPI Ignite and the HRB Primary Care Clinical Trials Network Ireland to offer a joint Population Health Seminar Series to showcase our staff and visitors' research.

<p>13th October, 1 pm:</p> <p><i>'Enhancing the English national audit of dementia: An intervention development study'</i></p> <p>Michael Sykes NIHR Doctoral Research Fellow, Newcastle University (UK)</p> 	<p>24th November, 1 pm:</p> <p><i>'Five positive outcomes from integrating PPI in our research: Experiences from a feasibility trial in multiple sclerosis (COB-MS)'</i></p> <p>Robert A. Joyce & Sinéad M. Hynes Discipline of Occupational Therapy, NUI Galway</p>  
<p>10th November, 1 pm:</p> <p><i>'Translating research into practice: A pilot study on assessment and diagnosis of multilingual children'</i></p> <p>Dr Stanislava Antonijevic-Elliott & Dr Rena Lyons Discipline of Speech and Language Therapy, NUI Galway</p>  	<p>8th December, 1pm:</p> <p><i>'Optimising prescribing for older people with multimorbidity in primary care'</i></p> <p>Dr Emma Wallace General Practice, Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland & GP Coolock, North Dublin</p> 

Although the seminar series was disrupted by the closure of university buildings, we soon adapted and were able to offer the Autumn series online. The online format enabled a diverse audience to attend and we had thirty participants on average at each event. The online format worked really well, with great interaction from the audience and positive feedback from attendees.

All events are advertised on the [HPRC newpage](#) and through our regular tweets [@HPRC_NUIG](#).

Peer Reviewed Journals

- Basquille, E., McKenna, V., Houlihan, A., Molony, K., McInerney, V., Mannio, E., Barton, J. & Waldron, D. (2020). An Exploration of Quality of Life and Symptom Bother in a Cardiac Rehabilitation Population using a Subjective Quality-of-Life Measure. *International Journal of Innovative Research in Medical Science*, 5(6), 189-200.
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- Branquinho, C., Kelly, C., Arevalo, L.C., Santos, A., & de Matos, M.G. (2020). Hey, we also have something to say: A qualitative study of Portuguese adolescents' and young people's experiences under COVID-19. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 48(8), 2740-2752.
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- Cullinan, J., Hodgins, M., Hogan, V., & Pursell, L. (2020). The Value of Lost Productivity from Workplace Bullying in Ireland. *Occupational Medicine*, 70, 251-258. doi.org/10.1093/occmed/kqaa067, <http://hdl.handle.net/10379/15991>.
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- Dzielska A., Kelly, C., Ojala, K., Finne, E., Spinelli, A., Furstova, J., Fismen, A.S., Ercan, O., Tesler, R., Melkumova, M., Canale, N., Nardone, P., Gudelj Rakic, J., & Dalmaso, P. (2020). Weight Reduction Behaviors among European Adolescents-Changes from 2001/2002 to 2017/2018. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 66(6S), S70-S80. <http://hdl.handle.net/10379/16016>.
- Finnegan, K., Kavanagh, A., Gavin, A., Költő, A., Kelly, C., & Nic Gabhainn, S. (2020). Should the Irish Health Behaviour in School-aged Children data collection be moved online? *National Institute of Health Science Bulletin*, 8(3), 29.

- Hodgins, M. & Mannix McNamara, P. (2020). Reframing Workplace Bullying: Guest Editorial International Journal of Workplace Health Management Vol. 13 (3), 241-244.
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- Lewis, D., Manolchev, C., Pursell, L., Hodgins, M., Hogan, V., & Mannix McNamara, P. (2020). The SME Paradox? Investigating Ill-Treatment Behaviours in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in Ireland. *International Small Business Journal*, 1-22, DOI: 10.1177/0266242620940165
- Matvienko-Sikar, K., Griffin, C., Kelly, C., Heary, C., Pedersen, M.L.P., McGrath, N., Toomey, E., Harrington, J., Hennessy, M., Queally, M., Hayes, C., McSharry, J., Devane, D., Byrne, M., & Kearney, P.M. (2020). A core outcome set for trials of infant-feeding interventions to prevent childhood obesity. *International Journal of Obesity*, 44(10), 2035-2043.
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Books and Book Chapters

Költő, A., Cosma, A., Young, H., Moreau, N., Pavlova, D., Tesler, R., Thorsteinsson, E.B., Vieno, A., Saewyc, E.M., & Nic Gabhainn, S. (2020). Romantic attraction and substance use in 15-year-old adolescents from eight European countries. In C. Meads (ed.) *Health and Wellbeing in Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*. Basel, Switzerland: MDPI. <https://doi.org/10.3390/books978-3-03928-369-9>.

Published Reports

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Other Journals

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Ravikumar, D. & Kelly, C. (2020). Dietary habits, food security and related health and wellbeing in the homeless population. *Obesity Reviews Supplement Article*. Poster Discussion. <https://doi.org/10.1111/orb.13118>.

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Other Publications

Barry, M.M (2020). A critical reflection on the enablers of transformative health promotion action. *European Journal of Public Health*, Volume 30, Issue Supplement_5, September 2020, ckaa165.301, <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/ckaa165.301>.

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IMPACCT Consortium. (2020). Working with Patients with Limited Health Literacy. Massive Open Online Course (September 2020) FutureLearn Platform <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/working-health-literacy>.

Kelly, C., Gavin, A., & Nic Gabhainn, S. (2020). *Surveying middle childhood and older adolescence in HBSC Ireland*. Report to WHO Regional Office for Europe, Copenhagen. Galway: WHO Collaborating Centre for Health Promotion Research, NUI Galway.

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Siciliani, L., Wild, C., McKee, M., Kringos, D., Barry, M.M., Barros, P.P., De Maeseneer, J., Murauskiene, L., & Ricciardi, W. (2020). *Strengthening vaccination programmes and health systems in the European Union: A framework for action*. CLARE: Reviews.

Sixsmith, J. & McKenna, V. (2020). *Progressing action on effective ways of developing health literate organisations*. A Briefing Paper. Report to WHO Regional Office for Europe. Galway: WHO Collaborating Centre for Health Promotion Research, NUI Galway.

Vaughan, E. (2020). *Why a rights-based approach is essential to the Covid-19 response*. *Hospital Professional News*, 75, 60. <http://hdl.handle.net/10379/16587>.

Presentations

Barry, M.M. (2020). A critical reflection on the enablers of transformative health promotion action. Presentation at IUHPE Workshop 'Health promotion: An integrative paradigm for sustainable health, wellbeing and development'. [Invited Oral Presentation], *16th World Congress on Public Health 2020 Public Health for the Future of Humanity: Analysis, Advocacy and Action*, Rome, Virtual Conference, 13-OCT-20.

Barry, M.M. (2020). Effective strategies for promoting youth mental health and wellbeing. [Plenary Lecture], *1st Annual Youth Mental Health Research Lunchtime Webinar Series*, NUI Galway, 05-OCT-20.

Barry, M.M. (2020). Promoting population mental health and wellbeing: What works? [Keynote Address], *ASEC – Associação pela Saúde Emocional de Crianças*, Brazil, webinar, 23-JUN-20.

Barry, M.M. & Kuosmanen, T. (2020). Framework for promoting young people's positive mental health and wellbeing. [Program Committee], *ERASMUS+ Project: Promoting positive mental health in the European youth sector. Partner Meeting*, Prague, 02-MAR-20.

Chatelan, A., Lebacqz, T., Rouche, M., Dzielska, A., Fismen, A-S., Kelly, C., & Castetbon, K. (2020). Time trends in the consumption of sugar- and artificially sweetened beverages among adolescents from 21 European countries between 2002 and 2018 *12th Excellence in Pediatrics Conference*.

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Coyle, J., Nic Gabhainn, S., & Kelly, C. (2020). The moderating effect of family support on the relationship between adolescent wellbeing and problematic social media use. Presented to the *12th Excellence in Pediatrics Conference*, (online) DEC-20.

Field, C.A. (2020). *Improving patient care through staff care: Implementing Schwartz Rounds in a Hospital Setting*. Presented to the Coombe Women and Infants Hospital. DEC-20.

Heinz, A., Költő, A., Godeau, E., Ehlinger, V., van Duin, C., Catunda, C., & Willems, H. (2020). What is problematic about binary questions on gender in health surveys—a missing answer analysis. *Excellence in Pediatrics 12th Conference*, online, 3-5-DEC-20. Abstract: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/2331205X.2020.1848781>.

Kelly, C. (2020). Enabling children to make healthy choices. [Invited Oral Presentation], *Promoting children's healthy eating in schools, nurseries and day care*, UK, 01-02-NOV-20.

Kelly, C., Ravikumar, D., Ryan, T., & Nic Gabhainn, S. (2020). Child and adolescent measures relevant to Planetary Health. Invited presentation to the *Annual Scientific Meeting of the Health Behaviour in School-aged Network*, Online, JUN-20.

Költő, A. (2020). Ethical aspects of researching sexual abuse and other sensitive issues in adolescents. Invited talk at the HBSC Luxembourg Methods Workshop: How to survey Child Abuse. Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg, 15-JAN-20.

Költő, A. & the HBSC Ireland Team (2020). Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Ireland National Report Launch January 2020. Presentation by A. Költő at The Irish Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Study 2018 report launch. Dublin, JAN-20. <http://www.nuigalway.ie/media/healthpromotionresearchcentre/hbscdocs/presentations/HBSC-Ireland-2018-National-Report-Launch-presentation.pdf>.

Költő, A., Gavin, A., & Nic Gabhainn, S. (2020). Modes of transport to or from school and mental wellbeing of schoolchildren in Ireland. Presented to the *24th Annual Health Promotion Conference: Creating a more Equitable and Sustainable Environment*, (online) Galway, 18-JUN-20.

Költő, A., Heinz, A., Moreno-Maldonado, C., Cosma, A., Piper, A., Saewyc, E.M., & Nic Gabhainn, S. (2020). Measuring sex and gender identity in a cross-national adolescent population survey: Perspectives of adolescent health experts from 44 countries. *Excellence in Pediatrics 12th Conference*, online, 3-5-DEC-20. Abstract: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/2331205X.2020.1848781>.

McKenna, V.B. & Sixsmith, J. (2020). *Health literacy—an integral component of health professional education*. [Conference Poster Abstract]. *Health Literacy UK Conference: 'Health for Life... Developing and promoting healthy environments across the life course'*. April 20, 2020. DOI: 10.37361/sighl.2020.1.1 https://sanc.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2020_sanc_sig_health_literacy_uk_conference_abstracts_v2.pdf.

McKenna, V.B. & Sixsmith, J. (2020). *Health literacy—an integral component of health professional education* [Invited Presentation]. Progressive Alliance of Clinical Educators (PACE) Seminar, College of Medicine Nursing and Health Sciences, National University of Ireland, Galway, Ireland. 9-JUN-20.

McKenna, V.B. & Sixsmith, J. (2020). Health Literacy-an integral component of Health Professional Education *Irish Network of Healthcare Educators*, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland. 13-FEB-2020.

Moore, S., Kairey, L., Sikar, K.M., Kearney, P., Kelly, C., Woodside, J., McKinley, M., & Harrington, J. (2020). Irish children's food and beverage portion sizes: a qualitative study of parents' views and practices. *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*, 620-620.

Nic Gabhainn, S. & Költő, A. (2020). Children's exposure to ultraviolet radiation – contribution from HBSC Ireland. Invited presentation to the Children's exposure to ultraviolet radiation – A risk profile for future skin cancers in Ireland, Webinar via Institute of Public Health, JUN-20.

Nic Gabhainn, S. & the HBSC Ireland team (2020). Health behaviour and its social context among schoolchildren in Ireland. Invited presentation to the *Launch of the HBSC Ireland National Report 2018*, Department of Health, Dublin, JAN-20.

Nic Gabhainn, S. (2020). Purpose, principles and practices: the NUI Galway Substance Use Policy. Invited presentation to *NUI Galway – on Drugs*, Webinar via NUI Galway, NOV-20.

Nic Gabhainn, S., Kelly, C., Gavin, A., Molcho, M., & Költő, A. (2020). HBSC Ireland and the Public Health community: partnerships and processes *World Congress on Public Health: Public health for the future of humanity: analysis, advocacy and action*, Rome, OCT-20.

Pursell, L. & Lavelle, M.J. (2020). Conference Co-Chair. 24th Annual Health Promotion Conference: Creating a more equitable and sustainable environment: Creating a more equitable and sustainable environment (Online event). NUI Galway, Ireland. 18-JUN-20.

Ravikumar, D. & Kelly, C. (2020). Evidence to support policy change in the homeless sector. Oral presentation session at the *SPHeRE Network 6th Annual Conference*. *Royal College of Surgeons Ireland*. 25-FEB-20.

Ravikumar, D. & Kelly, C. (2020). Dietary Habits, Food Security and related Health and Wellbeing in the Homeless Population. Poster and video presentation session at the *European and International Congress on Obesity*. Virtual conference. 1-4-SEPT-20.

Ravikumar, D., Ryan, T., Kelly, C., & Nic Gabhainn, S. (2020). Child and Adolescent measures relevant to Planetary Health. Oral presentation session at the *24th Annual Health Promotion Conference: Creating a more equitable and sustainable environment: Creating a more equitable and sustainable environment*, NUI Galway. 18-JUN-20.

Ravikumar, D., Spyreli, E., Woodside, J., McKinley, M., & Kelly, C. (2020). Parental perspectives on the influence of food environments on food decisions among low-income parents with children. Oral presentation session. Excellence in Pediatrics Institute 12th Conference, Virtual conference. 3-5-DEC-20.

Tully, L., Spyreli, E., Allen-Walker, V., & Kelly, C. (2020). Recruiting parents from disadvantaged backgrounds for infant nutrition research: Barriers, facilitators and recommendations for future research *European and International Congress on Obesity*.

Our Team

Our People

HPRC is a collective of interdisciplinary academics, researchers, PhD students and visiting fellows active in the field of health promotion research. We come from a variety of disciplines including public health, political science, sociology, systems science, psychology and economics.

Principal Investigators:

[Dr Colette Kelly](#) (Director, HPRC); [Dr Margaret Hodgins](#) (Deputy Director, HPRC); [Professor Margaret Barry](#); [Dr Catherine Anne Field](#); [Dr Vicky Hogan](#); [Dr Mary Jo Lavelle](#); [Lhara Mullins](#), [Dr Verna McKenna](#), [Dr Martin Power](#); [Dr Lisa Pursell](#); [Professor Saoirse Nic Gabhainn](#); [Dr Jane Sixsmith](#).

Administration:

Dr Vivienne Batt.



Researchers:

[Dr Katherine Dowling](#), [Ms Kathy Ann Fox](#), [Ms Aoife Gavin](#), [Ms Aisling Harrington](#), Ms Ailish Kelly, [Dr Andrés Kolto](#), [Dr Tuuli Kuosmanen](#), Ms Divya Ravikumar, [Ms Leonie Sherlock](#), [Dr Elena Vaughan](#), Ms Casey Watters, [Ms Lorraine Walker](#)



Current PhD students:

The full list of our PhD students, their thesis titles and research descriptions are available at: <http://www.nuigalway.ie/medicine-nursing-and-health-sciences/health-sciences/researchstudents/>

Our International Advisory Board



The management structure for research centres and units recommended by NUI Galway has been adopted by the Health Promotion Research Centre. We have an internal Steering Committee and an International Advisory Board.

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is comprised of the Director, Deputy Director, Principal Investigators and the Administrative Director. Meetings of the Steering Committee are held bi-monthly alternating with Research Meetings which includes representation from researchers. In addition, plenary meetings are held annually and are open to all members of the HPRC.

International Advisory Board

Our International Advisory Board represents the diversity of health promotion stakeholders including government, researchers and university research management. The Advisory Board (2020) included:

- Professor David J Hunter, Professor of Health Policy and Management, Newcastle University
- Dr Martin Weber, Division of Noncommunicable Diseases and Health Promotion, World Health Organization
- Ms Helen Deely, Office of Assistant National Director (AND), Health and Wellbeing, Health Service Executive
- Ms Bidy O'Neill, National Project Lead, Health and Wellbeing Programme, Department of Health
- Professor Lokesh Joshi, Vice-President for Research, National University of Ireland (NUI) Galway
- Professor Tim O'Brien, Dean of the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (CMNHS), NUI Galway
- Professor Caroline McIntosh, Head of School of Health Sciences, NUI Galway
- Dr Martina Ni Chúlain, Director of Strategic Development, CMNHS, NUI Galway.

The board met online on the 27th May 2020. Many thanks to all our members for their contributions to this board and also to Sarah McCormack, Health Service Executive, Professor Declan Devane, CMNHS, NUI Galway and Mr Aengus Parsons, Research Office, NUI Galway who attended this year's meeting as nominated representatives of their organisations.

A special thank you to Professor David J Hunter who retired from our board in 2020 having served four years advising us in his professional capacity as Professor of Health Policy and Management at Newcastle University.

Current Project Grants

NAME	TOTAL GRANT	TOTAL AWARDED TO HPRC	FUNDER
Family Caregiver Support	290,190	38,070	EU Erasmus+
IMPACCT: Health Literacy Education	449,956	70,320	EU Erasmus+
Positive Mental Health; Promotion of Wellbeing and Flourishing in the European Youth Sector	198,121	43,294	EU Erasmus+
Diabetic Foot Disease: from PRevention to treatment to Improved patient Outcomes (DFD PRIMO)	1,499,989	109,500	Health Research Board
Evaluation of the MindOut Programme in Post-Primary Schools	52,182	52,182	Health Service Executive
Exploring the World of Food – The Perspective of Families with Children	98,231	69,306	Safefood
Health Behaviour in School-aged Children 6, Ireland (2018-21)	709,041	709,041	Department of Health
Health Promoting Actions on Campus: Demonstration Project	59,167	59,167	Student Services, NUI Galway
LGBT+ Youth – Landscape and Gap Analysis	28,107	28,107	Department of Children & Youth Affairs
Monitoring the implementation of the MindOut social and emotional learning programme in post-primary schools in Mayo: A case study approach	9987	9987	Mental Health Ireland
Rapid Evidence Reviews on Improving Health Outcomes in Low-Income Communities and among Low-income Workers	7,000	7,000	Irish Heart Foundation
Working Towards Inclusive Health Care Systems to Promote Healthy Ageing	2,000	2,000	EIT Health
Research Capacity Building PPI	5,000	5,000	Athena Swan, NUI Galway
Implementation and outcomes of the Schwartz Rounds at Galway University Hospital	10,000	10,000	Returning Academic Carers Award
Total value of current grants held	3,418,971	1,212,974	

Contact Us

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