

Positive Initiatives and Events, HSE West **May - June 2012**

1. Minister for Health opens new Glenties Primary Care Centre in Co. Donegal

Minister for Health, Dr James Reilly, officially opened the new Glenties Primary Care Centre on 28th May. Glenties Primary Care Centre, located in the town centre, represents a €1.7 million investment by the HSE in providing health care in the region. It features a GP Practice with a range of HSE health professionals, including Public Health Nursing, Dentistry, Physiotherapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Dietician, Addiction Service and Chiropody. All of the HSE services at the Centre will be available to the population of the area, including those attending other GP practices.

2. Minister for Health officially opens new extension to Dungloe Community Hospital

On 28th May, the Minister for Health, Dr James Reilly, also officially opened a new extension to Dungloe Community Hospital. Dungloe Community Hospital is part of HSE Older Person Services. The hospital has 35 beds, including continuing-care beds, respite care beds, convalescent care beds and palliative care beds. Some €500,000 was spent on the new accommodation, consisting of four single high dependency rooms with en-suite facilities, a patients' dayroom, a new disabled WC and a hairdresser's room. An enclosed garden with soft-pour pathways was designed between the new day room and the new four-bedded extension; funding for the garden was provided by local fundraising and the Hospital Golden Jubilee Committee.

3. Emergency Aeromedical Service begins Operations

The Emergency Aeromedical Service (EAS), a joint project between the HSE National Ambulance Service (NAS) and the Irish Air Corps, began operations on Monday, 4th June.

The Health Minister, Dr. James Reilly, said that the pilot service will allow the HSE to determine the extent and type of dedicated aeromedical support needed for the emergency ambulance service in the region in the longer term.

4. Mayor of Galway launches Mental Health Matters for Volvo Ocean Race

The Mayor of Galway, Cllr. Hildegard Naughton, has officially launched the "Mental Health Matters" campaign in advance of the Volvo Ocean Race, which revisits Galway City from Saturday 30th June to Sunday 8th July. With an estimated footfall of 800,000 people, the Volvo Ocean Race presents an ideal opportunity for HSE West's Galway Mental Health Service to promote mental health in a positive light over the course of the week.

In conjunction with See Change, the HSE Mental Health Service in Galway is promoting positive mental health and working to reduce stigma through the "Mental Health Matters" project which will be showcased during the Volvo Ocean Race. The health service is working with key mental health providers in Galway to highlight what we can all do to reduce stigma and improve our mental health and the mental health of others.

5. Sacred Heart Hospital project wins Taoiseach's Public Service Excellence Award

A project by the HSE to transform the care culture and environment in the Sacred Heart Hospital, Roscommon, has won a 2012 Taoiseach's Public Service Excellence Award. The Award was presented to Julie Silke at a ceremony in Dublin Castle on Thursday, 21st June. The Taoiseach's Public Service Excellence Awards take place every two years and aim to showcase and celebrate public service projects and promote innovation and excellence.

The award winning project at the Sacred Heart Hospital, Roscommon, was adopted from the Eden Alternative, a worldwide care philosophy designed to de-institutionalise and transform the culture and environment of long term residential care. At the core of Eden is the empowerment of both residents and staff, giving them a strong voice in the direction of facility life. While this is not a new concept, it focuses on a different way of thinking, promotes flexibility and ultimately helps residents to "live in the moment". This culture change across the Sacred Heart commenced with a series of education sessions, including all aspects of dementia care, with staff at all levels, and has simultaneously led to significant reductions in the incidence of falls, use of benzodiazepines and staff absenteeism.

6. North Mayo Primary Care Team lead with new community based Pulmonary Rehabilitation Programme

The North Mayo Primary Care Team has recently completed a pilot exercise and education rehabilitation programme for people in the area with long-term lung conditions. The 'Pulmonary Rehabilitation' exercise and education programme was developed as a joint initiative between Dr. Cyril Rooney, Consultant Physician, Mayo General Hospital, and his team, and is delivered by the North Mayo Primary Care Team.

Ten patients with long-term lung conditions such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) were carefully selected from Killala, Crossmolina, Lahardane and Ballycastle, and they have successfully completed the first 10-week community-led programme in Mayo. This programme was facilitated in the local GAA Centre. Prior to this, patients would have been placed on a waiting list and had to travel to Mayo General Hospital to participate in a COPD rehabilitation programme.

7. Galway University Hospitals launches Nursing/Midwifery Management Development Programme

Galway University Hospitals (GUH) has launched a Management Development Programme for newly appointed and existing Nursing and Midwifery Managers working in the hospital. The Programme, which will run for the next 12 to 18 months, aims to develop the pivotal role of Nursing and Midwifery Managers by enhancing leadership and management skills.

The programme was developed by a group of staff from the hospital in partnership with union representatives, and the focus is on the key aspects of the role of Nursing and Midwifery Managers which include the delivery of high standards of patient care in line with best practice and the management of a clinical area and the resources within. The programme is being delivered by some of the many experts working in GUH, along with guest speakers.

8. Volunteer driver scheme launched for cancer patients in Mid West region

Nearly 100 volunteers from all parts of the Mid West region attended an induction day held at the Cancer Information & Support Centre at the Mid Western Regional Hospital in Limerick to mark the launch of the Irish Cancer Society's Care to Drive Scheme.

The scheme is aimed at those patients who need help with transport. The Irish Cancer Society manages all aspects of the volunteer drivers, including training, support and supervision.

Clients will be taken from their homes to the treatment centre or to an appropriate drop off / collection point for a bus. It works in cooperation with existing services to improve the experience of cancer patients and, where possible, will be tailored to the requirements of the individual patient. The service is confidential and all volunteer drivers have been trained, garda vetted and have appropriate insurance.

9. Family Carers receive a unique Retreat Weekend Away

Some 27 family carers from Galway, Mayo and Sligo were treated to a well-earned break from 8 – 10th June at an event hosted by St. Angela's College, Sligo, in partnership with the Sligo Lions Club and HSE West. 11 family carers from Galway attended the weekend and were funded by the Galway, Loughrea, Gort, Ballinasloe and Tuam Lions Clubs. The Retreat Weekend was organised to provide family carers with an opportunity to relax, have fun and make new friends with people who are in a similar situation and who can support one another on an ongoing basis.

10. Teen Parents Support Programme at GUH launches 2000-2011 Report

The Teen Parents Support Programme (TPSP) at Galway University Hospitals provides services for young people who become parents when they are aged 19 years or under and supports them until their children are 2 years of age. The service is available to teen parents living in Galway City and County and the support is offered for all areas of a young parent's life: health, relationships, accommodation, social welfare, education, training, child development, parenting, childcare and any other issue that is of concern to the young parent. In 2000 the Galway TPSP was set up as part of a pilot programme. In 2002 the programme was mainstreamed following a three year evaluation and TPSP Galway is now one of 11 Teen Parents Support Programmes nationally. The programme in Galway is managed by the Social Work Department in Galway University Hospitals.

At the launch of the Teen Parents Support Programme 2000-2011 Report, Aileen Davies, Programme Leader gave an overview of the success of the programme. She said, "Over 800 young parents have been referred to our service since the initial pilot project. One of the significant outcomes of the programme has been that a third of the young parents who have engaged with the Galway TPSP have remained in or returned to education. These figures reflect the national TPSP outcomes in relation to education. In a recent study on 'Childhood Deprivation' it has been shown that children whose mothers have no qualifications are at more significant risk of child specific deprivation compared with those who have been educated. It highlights the importance of a basic level of education for the mother."

11. Prescribing exercise gets results in Sligo/Leitrim and South Donegal

The GP Exercise Referral Programme, which is a physical activity initiative to help adults get active, is now up and running in the Sligo, Leitrim and South Donegal areas. GPs in the area have been recruited by the HSE's Health Promotion Service, and patients are now being directly referred from their GPs to the local leisure facilities as part of the Exercise Referral Programme.

Liz Martin, Health Promotion Officer, HSE West, and one of the organisers of the programme in the North West, says; "Each patient is referred to a qualified Local Coordinator who guides them through a 12-week physical activity programme. The Local Coordinator offers behaviour change intervention, specialist advice about physical activity and disease as well as motivational support."

12. Operating Theatre Suite Development at Nenagh Hospital, Co. Tipperary

The HSE has awarded a contract to Clancy Construction, Drangan, Thurles, Co. Tipperary for the construction works associated with the redevelopment of a theatre suite and associated day ward at Nenagh General Hospital.

Designed by a multidisciplinary design team, led by O'Connell Mahon Architects, the project will provide a modern operating department, including two new replacement theatres and related facilities, a fully refurbished day ward, staff changing and storage facilities. The modern purpose-built environment will aid the provision of an expanded surgical service to meet the needs of the general public. A new canteen facility will also be provided at ground floor level during the course of the work.

Enabling works commenced on Monday 11th June, with the main (phase one) works, which involve the construction of the new theatre block due to commence about four weeks later. This main phase is due to be completed in July 2013 with the entire project to be completed in January 2014.

13. "Baby Friendly Hospital" award for Galway University Hospitals

Galway University Hospitals has been re-designated as a "Baby Friendly Hospital". The Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative is a global programme by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to implement best practice in maternity services for the promotion and support of breastfeeding. Galway University Hospitals was first designated as a "Baby Friendly Hospital" in 2006 and ongoing audit plus recent external assessment involving all grades of staff and interviews with mothers was undertaken in order to retain this important award.

14. Mid Western Regional Hospital Group including St. John's Hospital becomes a smoke free campus in 2012

The Mid-Western Regional Hospital Group including St. John's Hospital (Dooradoyle, Regional Maternity, Nenagh General, Ennis General and Croom Orthopaedic Hospital) introduced a smoke free campus policy on 31st May 2012, World No Tobacco Day.

From this date, it will no longer be possible to smoke in any of the hospital grounds; for example, entrances, doorways, walkways, internal roads, bus shelters, car parks, cars, bicycle shelters etc. This policy will apply to the Mid-Western Regional Hospital Group sites, including St. John's Hospital. The introduction of this new policy is also in line with the Mid-Western Regional Hospital's designation as one of the eight regional cancer centres in Ireland.

15. Donation of €30,000 Ultrasound Machine to ICU at Galway University Hospitals

A family, who wish to remain anonymous, have donated an ultrasound machine to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at Galway University Hospitals where a member of the family was successfully treated for H1N1 influenza induced Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome, a life-threatening illness, last year. The H1N1 surge, which hit Ireland during December 2010 and January 2011, put unprecedented pressure on Intensive Care Units in the country. The Intensive Care Unit at GUH was operating at 120% capacity during the surge with nursing and medical staff working additional shifts to cope with demand.

16. South Leitrim Primary Care Team hosts Community Health Forum Information Evening

The South Leitrim Primary Care Team hosted a community information evening on Thursday, 17th May, in the Community Centre, Carrigallen. At the Information Evening, presentations were given in relation to looking after your mental health, dealing with financial concerns, the Simon Community and their work and the community text alert scheme.

The information evening was also an opportunity for attendees to view stands on Citizens Information and Regional Advocacy Service; Leitrim Calling; Leitrim County Council and Community Forum; Leitrim Development Company; Family Resource Centre; MABS; Leitrim Association for People with Disabilities; Get Vocal Leitrim (Advocacy Group for Older People); the Fair Deal Scheme and HSE podiatry service.

17. Mayo Men on the Move

More than 100 men from Mayo are taking part in a physical activity programme called the *Mayo Men on the Move* Programme which is a HSE-funded initiative co-ordinated by the Mayo Sports Partnership. The programme is also supported by Croí, the West of Ireland Cardiology Foundation and Midwest Radio.

The programme is running in the Ballina, Westport and Claremorris areas and, as an initial target, all of the men recently came together to complete a 5k walk and fun run at Lough Lannagh, Castlebar.

Initially, information evenings were held in three locations where men enrolled for the programme and received a free health check. The programme targeted men over 35, who were physically inactive. Local leaders in the three towns support the programme and lead the physical activity programmes twice weekly at each location. The programme is being formally evaluated, with the men's health data being updated at week 8, week 16 and again towards the end of the programme.

18. HSE Health Promotion Services launch GP Exercise Referral Project in Galway

A new GP Exercise Referral Project to help adults become more active is now up and running in the HSE West area. Many GPs in Galway city and county have signed up to refer their patients to a fully trained exercise co-ordinator to complete an exercise programme at a local exercise facility.

The project is a partnership between the Irish College of General Practitioners, the HSE and the Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management. It is managed locally by the HSE Health Promotion Services and provides patients with an easy way to increase their levels of physical activity and to stay active.

19. Sligo General Hospital's Sun Awareness Day

The Dermatology Unit at Sligo General Hospital held a free Sun Awareness Day on Friday, 25th May in the Quayside Shopping Centre in Sligo.

Selene Daly, Dermatology Clinical Nurse Specialist, SGH, was on hand to offer advice regarding sun awareness, and Julienne Curran, Medical Relations Manager with La Roche Posay, brought along a Dermo-analyser machine and was available on the day to answer queries regarding skin care regimes. The Dermo-analyser machine indicates the damage generated by UV rays under the skin surface, shows up specific skin areas particularly sensitive to sun exposure and can visualise the current and future appearance of the skin to show people the potential danger of sun exposure.

20. Members of Traveller Community graduate as Community Health Workers in Castlebar, Co Mayo

On 11th June, the Taoiseach, Mr Enda Kenny, was guest speaker at a Graduation and Award Ceremony in Castlebar where six members of the Traveller community were presented with FETAC Level 3 Certificates. The event was organised by Mayo Travellers Support Group and the HSE's Regional Traveller Health section.

Mayo Travellers Support Group is funded by the Traveller Health Unit, HSE, and this course was funded by the VEC which contributed greatly to the success of this programme.

21. Parkview House Art Exhibition

The Parkview House Creative Group officially launched their Art Exhibition in the Artco Gallery in Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, on Wednesday, 23rd May, with a magnificent array of paintings from up to a dozen artists.

The Creative Group was set up in September 2011 to fulfill a therapeutic need within the Donegal Mental Health Services and the exhibition showcases participants' work. The exhibition will run until June 27th at the Artco Gallery, Pearse Road, Letterkenny.

**Communications Department
HSE West**