



FEB 2025, ISSUE 16

# SPHPSS IN FOCUS

A quarterly newsletter from the UCD School of Public Health,  
Physiotherapy and Sports Science



## WELCOME MESSAGE

Welcome to the first issue of 2025 of our school newsletter SPHPSS in Focus. As always it has been a busy time in the school, with lots of news about our staff, students and alumni to report on.

Since our last newsletter, we welcomed Joanne Coyne (Senior Administrator - Admin Support Team), Dr Alexander Latinjak (Lecturer/Assistant Professor of Sport & Exercise Psychology), and Eline De Jager and Nora McGinty (PhD students). We hope they have all settled into the School and wish them well. In January we celebrated the career of Professor Patrick Wall and his contributions to UCD and beyond - we wish him all the very best for the next chapter.

Congratulations to Professor Kate Pumpa, Professor Eamonn Delahunty, Assistant Professor Cailbhe Doherty and Ms Nicola Dervan on their UCD College of Health and Agricultural Sciences Awards for excellence and innovation in teaching and learning. Well done also to Associate Professor Tara Cusack, who together with Associate Professor Nicola Mountford (Maynooth University), won the [#OurEUStory Awards](#) for excellence in communicating research impact at the 2024 Access Europe Showcase. Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick and Mary Brigid Collins (Pavee Point) were awarded the Kevin Kelleher Medal for Best Oral Presentation at the RCPI Faculty of Public Health Medicine Winter Scientific Meeting. Last but not least, the SPHPSS Institute for Sport & Health ranked #1 in Ireland (again!) and has moved up to #17 in the world. Fantastic achievements!

We hope you enjoy reading this issue and encourage you to circulate SPHPSS in Focus among your colleagues and networks.

**Asst Professor Catherine Phillips**

Editor of SPHPSS in Focus

## WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- School and Division News
- Research Highlights
- Achievements and Awards
- Teaching and Learning Updates
- Healthy UCD events
- School Committee Updates
- New Appointments
- Recent Publications

## CORE TEACHING PROGRAMMES

- [BSc Sport, Health and Exercise Science](#)
- [BSc Physiotherapy](#)
- [BSc Sport and Exercise Management](#)
- [H Dip in Safety, Health and Well-Being at Work](#)
- [Cert. in Safety and Health at Work](#)
- [MPH](#)
- [MPH \(Nutrition\)](#)
- [MPH \(Global Health\)](#)
- [MSc Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics](#)
- [MSc Occupational Safety and Health](#)
- [Prof Masters in Physiotherapy](#)
- [MSc Coaching Science in Sport](#)
- [MSc Sport Management](#)

# A Tribute to Professor Wall: A Legacy of Public Health Excellence

On the 13th January colleagues from across the University, governance and industry organisations attended a reception in the University club to mark the retirement of Professor Patrick Wall, and celebrate his truly remarkable career and immeasurable impact on public health, veterinary medicine, and food safety. Speeches were delivered by CHAS Principal Professor Cecily Kelleher, Associate Professor Mary Codd, Assistant Professor Fiona Lalor, and Head of School Associate Professor James Matthews.



Professor Wall's contributions span continents, disciplines, and generations of students and professionals who have had the privilege of learning from, and working with, him. He has been an inspiration. His engaging, humorous, and thought-provoking teaching style made complex topics accessible and enjoyable. Students recall his ability to blend academic rigour with real-world application, making every lecture a captivating experience. His contributions to the Master of Public Health and Master of Food Safety and Risk Assessment programmes at UCD have shaped the careers of countless public health professionals worldwide.



*Pictured (L-R): Professors Cecily Kelleher and Patrick Wall, Associate Professors Mary Codd and James Matthews, and Assistant Prof Fiona Lalor*



*Pictured: Professor Patrick Wall with his last class of MPH students.*

Professor Wall has worn many hats, as a veterinarian, food safety expert, public health physician, educator and mentor. As the first Chief Executive of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, he played a pioneering role in shaping food safety regulations in Ireland. His leadership extended to the European Food Safety Authority, where he served as Chairperson, influencing food safety policy at an international level. His work with the WHO, European Union agencies, and national governments cemented his reputation as a global expert and thought leader in One Health, epidemiology, zoonoses and risk communication.



*Pictured: UCD COVID-19 Contact Tracing Team with Professor Wall*

Pat's mentorship has been life-changing for many. Colleagues and students describe him as an inspiration, a guiding light, always willing to advise, support and challenge his students. His dedication extended beyond academia, whether training army cadets in contact tracing, working with animals or his horses, championing food safety in global forums, or trekking through the Malaysian rainforest to engage with indigenous communities. His passion for public health knew no bounds.



Pat, as you embark on this new chapter, we celebrate your incredible legacy. Your wit, wisdom, and unwavering commitment to public health will be missed, but your impact will endure. We wish you endless adventures, well-earned relaxation, and the continued pursuit of your many interests. From all your colleagues, students and friends, míle buiochas agus go n-éirí an bóthar leat I gconaí.

# CHAS Teaching and Learning Awards 2024

The School has a long tradition in excellence in teaching and learning, and this year was no different. After a highly competitive process, Professor Kate Pumpa, Professor Eamonn Delahunt, Dr Cailbhe Doherty and Ms Nicola Dervan were all recognised by the UCD College of Health and Agricultural Sciences for their excellence and innovation in teaching and learning. Congratulations to all!



Professor Kate Pumpa



Professor Eamonn Delahunt



Dr Cailbhe Doherty



Ms Nicola Dervan

## Intertrade Ireland Early Innovator Award



Congratulations to SPHPSS Professor Kate Pumpa, Assistant Professor Katy Horner and Associate Professor Stephen Redmond (UCD Engineering), who were the recipients of the InterTradeIreland Early Innovator Award in December 2024.

Their energy expenditure prototype is currently undergoing validation in the Human Performance Laboratory at the UCD Institute for Sport & Health.

*Pictured (l-r): Professor Kate Pumpa, Alison Currie, Director of Innovation & Entrepreneurship at InterTradeIreland, Associate Professor Stephen Redmond, Dr Katy Horner.*

## Prof Patricia Fitzpatrick & Mary Brigid Collins awarded Kevin Kelleher Medal at Faculty of Public Health Medicine Conference

Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick with co-presenter Mary Brigid Collins, Pavee Point, were awarded the Kevin Kelleher Medal for Best Oral Presentation at the RCPI Faculty of Public Health Medicine Winter Scientific Meeting, December 2024.

Their presentation was titled: "Smoking and vaping prevalence, awareness of smoking cancer risk and identification of the current barriers and facilitators to cancer screening among Irish Travellers."

Read more [here](#).



# UCD led CHAMELEONS project announced as one of the #OurEUStory Award winners at 2024 Access Europe Showcase

Associate Professor Tara Cusack (SPHPSS) and Associate Professor Nicola Mountford (Maynooth University) were prize winners of the [#OurEUStory Awards](#) for excellence in communicating research impact at the 2024 Access Europe Showcase in Croke Park in Dublin in November with their EU project CHAMELEONS.

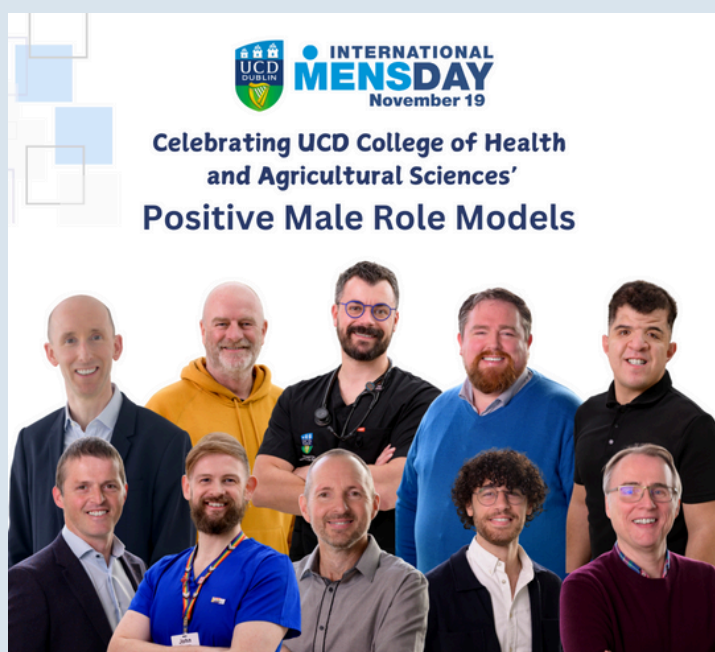
Irish civil society organisations from around the country entered the #OurEUStory Awards competition which celebrates the transformational impact that EU-funded projects have on communities throughout Ireland. Each entrant posted a video on social media telling the story of their very own EU funded project's journey.

The UCD winning entry can be viewed at [University College Dublin – Chameleons](#).



Tim Harrington, Director of EU Institutions and Communications at the Department of Foreign Affairs presenting the prizes to the teams from [Oxfam Ireland](#), [Dublin City Council](#) and [University College Dublin – Chameleons](#)

## International Men's Day 2024



International Men's Day is celebrated annually on 19th November. This global awareness day celebrates the positive value men bring to the world, their families and communities. It highlights positive role models and raises awareness of men's health and wellbeing. The theme for 2024 was "Positive Male Role Models".

The UCD School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science is one of five schools in the UCD College of Health and Agricultural Sciences (CHAS). To celebrate International Men's Day 2024, we asked some of our male CHAS staff, students and alumni to tell us a little about what they do in their everyday lives that contributes positively to their communities, health and wellbeing and inspires others.

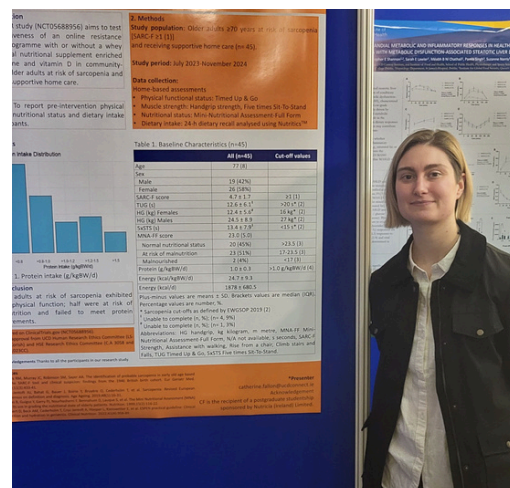
Find out what they had to say [here](#).

## Institute Research Showcase 2024

The 3rd UCD Institute of Food and Health Research Showcase was held on the 10th December 2024 in the UCD O'Brien Centre for Science. The showcase included oral presentations, poster presentations, and keynote speakers Prof. Julie Lovegrove and Prof. Helen Roche.

The Oral Presentation Winner of the Michael Gibney Memorial Award, was Ruth Connolly for her presentation "Butyric acid with resistant potato starch improved growth and health of weaned pigs". The Poster prize winners included: PhD Poster Winner, Dr. Ya Gao and Student Poster Winner, Ailbhe McGurrin.

PhD student, Catherine Fallon, also presented a poster on the baseline characteristics of the POWER study, entitled "POWER Study: physical function, nutritional status and dietary intake of adults aged 70+ at risk of sarcopenia". The project is supervised by Professor Clare Corish, Associate Professor Caitriona Cunningham and Assistant Professor Katy Horner.



Pictured: Catherine Fallon at the Institute of Food and Health Research Showcase

# Institute for Sport & Health ranked 17th in World, 1st in Ireland

UCD SPHPSS Institute for Sport & Health ranked #24  
in Global Ranking of Sport Science Schools and Departments 2023

2023

GLOBAL RANKING OF SPORT SCIENCE  
SCHOOLS AND DEPARTMENTS

OUT NOW ▶▶▶



The UCD SPHPSS Institute for Sport & Health has again been ranked #1 in Ireland in the ShanghaiRanking's Global Ranking of Sport Science Schools and Departments. We are delighted to report that we are now #17 in the world, up from #24 in 2023 and #25 in 2022. These rankings reflect the School's commitment to continually improving and enhancing our world-class sports science education and facilities for our students and producing internationally recognised research in the sports science area.

Read more [here](#).

## UCD Research Impact Case Study Competition 2024

Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick and Dr Alison Connolly of the UCD School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science were two of 11 finalists in the 2024 UCD Research Impact Case Study Competition, with Professor Fitzpatrick winning the Engaged Research prize for her work supporting cancer patients to quit smoking.

Professor Fitzpatrick's '[Supporting cancer patients to quit smoking post diagnosis](#)' led to improved treatment outcomes and positive effects on patients' health. This Irish Cancer Society-funded research was co-developed with cancer patients who smoke to develop a way to help them cease smoking. Dr Connolly's '[Using human biomonitoring to understand chemical exposures among the population](#)' studies include measuring human exposure to the most widely used herbicide in the world, Glyphosate. This research measured exposure levels and evaluated the risks among professional gardeners and agricultural workers. Read more [here](#).



Dr Alison Connolly and Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick, pictured with UCD Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact Professor Kate Robson Brown

## Global Public Health and Sports Studies Summer School 2025



Applications are now open for our Global Public Health and Sports Studies Summer School, taking place at UCD from 16-27 June 2025. The Summer School is suitable for undergraduate students interested in global public health and/or sports and health-related areas. Summer School applicants may currently be enrolled in programmes such as health sciences, public health, athletic therapy, sports studies, physical therapy, sports psychology, kinesiology, medicine or nutrition. Via a series of lectures, innovative practical workshops and interactive group learning activities, students will be guided through the most recent research and teachings from a global health and sports and performance perspective, delivered by a team of world-class researchers, teachers and clinical experts. In addition to learning activities, students will enjoy a full programme of cultural and social activities. Find out more and apply [here](#).

# UCD SPHPSS Representation at the 2024 Winter Scientific Meeting of the Faculty of Public Health Medicine, RCPI



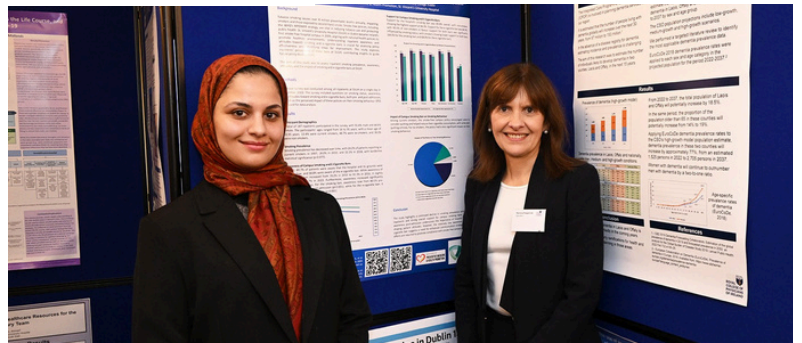
The UCD SPHPSS was very well represented at the Winter Scientific Meeting of the Faculty of Public Health Medicine, at the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, in December.

Pictured left are UCD CHAS Principal and Dean of the Faculty of Public Health Medicine, Professor Cecily Kelleher, SPHPSS faculty including Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick and Associate Professor Mary Codd, as well as Karl Conyard, Dr Alex Douglass, several MPH graduates, PhD students and representatives of Pavee Point, amongst others.

Overall there were nine oral or poster presentations from the School.

Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick and Dr Malak Naim (MPH graduate 2024) participated in the poster presentation at the RCPI Faculty of Public Health Medicine Winter Scientific Meeting on 4 December 2024.

The title of Malak's presentation, based on her MPH dissertation, was "Inpatient Awareness and Attitudes Towards Hospital Campus Smoking Bans and E-Cigarette Bans Among Patients Admitted to St Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin, Ireland."



*Pictured (l-r): Malak Naim and Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick*

## Graduation Time!

Farewell to our final #Classof2024 students who graduated on 5th December!

Receiving their scrolls were graduates of the following programmes: HDip Safety, Health & Wellbeing at Work, Master of Public Health, MSc Advanced Physiotherapy Studies, MSc Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics, MSc Coaching Science in Sport, MSc Healthcare Informatics, MSc Occupational Safety & Health, MSc Sport Management and Professional Masters in Physiotherapy, in addition to PhD students.

Well done to all; we can't wait to see where your journeys take you next!

View the full Graduation Gallery [here](#).



# Healthy Eating Active Living Week



The annual Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) week, a collaboration between Healthy UCD and the MSc in Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics and MSc Physiotherapy programmes, took place during the week of November 11th 2024.

Students worked in mixed discipline groups to create innovative, user-centred health solutions to barriers to healthy eating and active living for the UCD community.

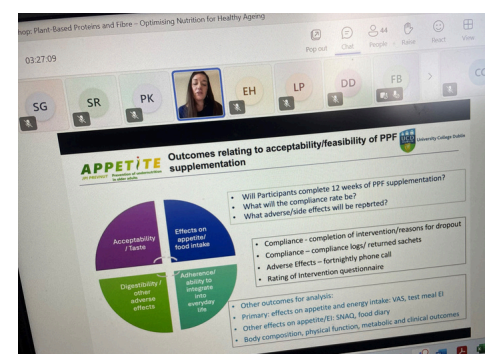
Initiatives included an elective physical education module, sugar sweetened beverage signposting in student union shops, exercise snacking videos and easy and affordable healthy recipes via QR codes in student residences.



## APPETITE Industry Workshop: Plant-Based Proteins and Fibre – Optimising Nutrition for Healthy Ageing

Dr Katy Horner gave an excellent presentation at an online Industry workshop, Plant-Based Proteins and Fibre – Optimising Nutrition for Healthy Ageing, an important deliverable for the APPETITE project that was held on November 5th 2024. The title of Katy's presentation was 'Is plant protein and fibre supplementation acceptable and feasible in older adults? Findings from the APPETITE multi-centre trial'.

Other contributors included our partners from Germany, France and the UK. Almost 70 people attended from across the Globe. The overall objective of [APPETITE](#) is to prevent undernutrition in community-dwelling older persons by enhancing appetite through targeted nutrition and physical activity.



Dr Katy Horner presenting the APPETITE Study

# Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick appointed Chair, Expert Advisory Group, HSE National Public Health Strategy 2024-2025



The Health Service Executive is developing a strategy for Public Health.

Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick has been appointed as the Chair of the Expert Advisory Group for the HSE National Public Health Strategy 2024-2025. [For more info.](#) Congratulations Professor Fitzpatrick!



Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick



## Introducing UCD Sport, Health and Exercise Science to International Students at Escola Global Mallorca



We recently introduced our new BSc Sport, Health, and Exercise Science programme to international students at Escola Global Mallorca in Palma, Spain.

Highlighted were the programme's focus on scientific excellence, real-world applications and global career pathways, while showcasing the unique opportunities available at UCD for academic and personal development.

Find out more about the programme [here](#).

## BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition (BTYSTE)

The European Commission Representation in Ireland had amazing EU funded postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers from the SPHPSS (Daniel Hickey and Dr Hananeh Younesian) showing fantastic, interactive, science activities as part of the European Commission's 'Science is Wonderful!' programme. For more info:

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/euireland/>

Linkedin: [Link 1](#) & [Link 2](#)



Pictured (l-r): Dr. Hananeh Younesian (SPHPSS) with Aline PAULISSEN (Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Unit, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture of the European Commission)



Pictured (l-r): Daniel Hickey (PhD student, SPHPSS), Timilehin Aderinola, Helen Kearns (Head of Media, Communication and Outreach at European Commission Dublin Representation), Norah Patten (aeronautical engineer), and other staff of European Commission Representation in Ireland.



Pictured (l-r): MSCA postdoc fellows based at UCD, Giorgia Pregnolato (School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering), Hananeh Younesian,, Thomas Legrand (School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering), and Timilehin Aderinola ((School of Computer Science)





The UCD SPHPSS is recruiting three early-career faculty through the Ad Astra Fellows programme, building on the success of the programme in previous years.

These appointments present an outstanding opportunity for candidates to advance their academic careers in a dynamic and engaged research-intensive university that makes a real difference to the world.

- Assistant Professor in Climate Change & Health
- Assistant Professor in Artificial Intelligence for Sport Performance
- Assistant Professor in Global Public Health and Policy (joint appointment with the UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems)

The closing date for applications is 21st February 2025. Further information is available [here](#).

## PREVNUT Meeting, Dijon France 2024

From November 7th-8th, 2024, the UCD APPETITE team, including Professor Clare Corish, Dr Katy Horner, and PhD student Anna Quinn, attended a PREVNUT meeting in Dijon, France. Hosted at the Centre des Sciences du Goût et de l'Alimentation (CSGA-INRAE), the event brought together researchers from institutions across Europe who had received funding under the JPI 'A Healthy Diet for a Healthy Life' call for the development of targeted nutrition for prevention of undernutrition for older adults (PREVNUT). The UCD team presented preliminary findings from the APPETITE project, contributing to a programme featuring presentations on major initiatives such as AMBROSIA, CHOKO-AGE, EAT4AGE, and PROMED-COG. In addition to presentations, the meeting included poster sessions and workshops focused on preventing undernutrition and advancing research on ageing populations. Outside the sessions, attendees could explore the charming streets of Dijon and sample its famous Dijon mustard.



Above: Dr Katy Horner presenting the APPETITE Study  
Below: Professor Clare Corish, Anna Quinn and Dr Katy Horner

## Congratulations to Final Year MSc in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics students

Congratulations to final year MSc in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics students who all successfully completed and presented their MSc dissertations on 11th December 2024 to the external examiner, Professor Stella Volpe, their peers, Year 1 students, staff and visitors.

Jennifer Feighan, CEO of the Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute (INDI), opened the day. Professor Volpe reported being very impressed with the variety and standard of research undertaken and expressed interest in developing a student exchange programme between UCD and Virginia Tech. Many of the students have submitted an abstract of their work for the INDI research symposium scheduled for May 14th.



Year 2 MSc in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics students, all smiling having presented their MSc dissertations

# Assistant Professor Alison Connolly at the International Society of Exposure Science 2024 conference

In October 2024, Dr Alison Connolly attended the International Society of Exposure Science (ISES) in Montreal, Canada.

The conference, titled 'Exposures that Impact Health in Vulnerable Populations', brought together communities from academia, government, and non-profit organisations working on the front lines to protect valuable commodities and people. The conference had over 750 presentations and 95 symposia with oral presentations.



*Pictured: Dr Alison Connolly presenting her research findings at ISES 2024*

Dr Connolly was the chair of three symposia on Emerging Topics in Human Biomonitoring for Exposure Science, which included an oral presentation from Dr Connolly on the UCD studies, EIRE - the Neonicotinoid Insecticide Exposure study, and the HBM4IRE - the Human Biomonitoring for Ireland (HBM4IRE) feasibility study.



## Conference Alert: World Conference on Tobacco Control!

The World Conference on Tobacco Control will take place in Dublin from the 23rd-25th of June 2025. Save the date!

Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick is on the International Board of Reviewers for the conference.



## Welcome Year 1 MSc Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics students



*Incoming MSc in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics students, January 2025*

We welcomed 26 incoming students to the MSc in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics programme at Orientation on 9th January 2025. Many thanks to all from inside and outside the School who contributed to the Orientation. We wish the incoming students the very best for their time in UCD and look forward to working with them to develop their competence as dietitians over the coming two years.

# Healthy UCD: Resistance Exercise Snacking Opportunity for Desk-Based Staff



Healthy UCD is delighted to collaborate with Dr James Timmons in a novel research study exploring the impact of Resistance Exercise Snacking on strength and fitness in busy desk-based staff currently engaging in no exercise or only one structured exercise session per week.

Starting in early February 2025, this 8-week pilot will involve participants following an exercise programme and will include a pre- and post-assessment at the UCD Institute for Sport and Health.



## LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS!

**The Effect of Resistance Training Snacks on Office Workers**

### WHAT WE NEED

- UCD desk based staff
- Currently taking part in no or only one structured exercise session per week
- Not have any medical conditions or injuries that prevent you from taking part in the resistance exercise

**Discover the Exciting New Field of Exercise Snacking!**  
Join us for an 8-week intervention that will enhance your strength and endurance.

**Be Tested in UCD's State-of-the-Art Facilities!**  
Participants will have the unique opportunity to undergo testing at UCD's world-class Institute of Sport and Health

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT US AT** →

James Timmons  
Email: [james.timmons1@ucd.ie](mailto:james.timmons1@ucd.ie)  
085 157 2676



Designed to fit into busy workdays, the programme offers a quick and effective way to enhance strength and fitness in just 5 minutes, twice daily. Participants will benefit from baseline and progress assessments at UCD's state-of-the-art facilities, contributing to workplace well-being, while aligning with Healthy UCD's mission to promote a healthier campus culture.

If you are interested in participating in this research study you can contact James by email or phone - see details above.

## Winner of Best Research Project Paper in the Irish Healthcare Awards 2024



Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick, co-authors Olalekan Popoola and Damzi Boms (MPH-EPH students graduated 2024) and colleagues from the National Screening Service and the National Immunisation Office, won the Best Research Project Paper in the Irish HealthCare Awards 2024.

The winning article "The effect of HPV vaccination on the rate of high-grade cytology in 25-year-old women attending cervical screening in Ireland" provides the first evidence of the benefit of the HPV vaccine in Ireland.

You can read the full article here:  
Rourke, M., Fitzpatrick, P., Popoola, O. et al. The effect of HPV vaccination on the rate of high-grade cytology in 25-year-old women attending cervical screening in Ireland. *Ir J Med Sci* 193, 665-668 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11845-023-03551-y>

### Winner:

**National Screening Service, HSE** - First Irish data on the effect of HPV vaccination on cervical cancer

"An excellent presentation to demonstrate the effect of HPV vaccination on cervical cancer rates."

# Launch of the ASPHER Core Curriculum for Public Health



The first edition of the Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER) Core Curriculum for Public Health ([www.ccp.aspher.org](http://www.ccp.aspher.org)), led by SPHSS Associate Professor Mary Codd and ASPHER Fellow, Karl Conyard (SPHPSS), was launched at the 17th European Public Health Conference in Lisbon in November. This has its origins in the work of the ASPHER over two decades on core competencies for public health professionals and represents a collaborative effort from 60 member Schools and Institutes of Public Health across Europe over the past 2.5 years. The extensive scoping and consultative processes resulted 35 subject areas collated into four domains of

- Core Subject Areas, essential in all graduate programmes in public health;
- Subject-specific Areas, largely determined by the challenges of our times;
- Core cross-curricular Subject Areas, applicable across programmes and integrated with core and subject-specific areas; and
- Core Interdisciplinary Professional Skills, emphasising the inter-disciplinarity of public health and the pivotal role of public health professionals in effecting change for the improvement and protection of the public health.

The overall objective of this Core Curriculum for Public Health is to reflect where and how education and training in public health can be improved to best equip current and future public health professionals to contribute maximally to their communities and societies, nationally and internationally.



*Pictured: Dr Alexander Latinjak*

## New Assistant Professor

Dr Alexander Latinjak recently joined the SPHPSS as a Lecturer/Assistant Professor of Sport & Exercise Psychology. Alexander holds a BSc and PhD in Psychology from Barcelona. He has worked at the University of Girona, Spain and the University of Suffolk, UK and served as a visiting researcher at the University of Wolverhampton, UK and the University of Thessaly, Greece.

Alexander is an editorial board member of the International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology and the Journal of Applied Sport Psychology. He is the author of *Self-talk in Sport* (Routledge, 2020) and *PsychMapping in Sport, Exercise, and Performance* (Routledge, 2024).

As an applied sport psychologist, he brings extensive experience working with elite athletes in tennis, football, basketball, and motor racing.

We wish Alexander all the best in his new role!



## New PhD Students

After completing a full year internship at the Dutch Olympic training centre, Eline De Jager finished a Master's degree in Sport Sciences.

In October 2024, Eline started a PhD under the supervision of Dr Sinead Holden, focusing on Heart Rate Variability changes due to ovarian hormone profiles measured by wearables.

Eline has just arrived in ISH after moving from the Netherlands, her home country. She is excited for the years ahead.



Norah McGinty, a recent graduate of BSc Health and Performance Science, has joined the school. Norah is undertaking a PhD "to monitor the relationship between growth, development, performance and injury risk among youth field hockey players in Ireland."

Her primary supervisor is Dr Sinead Holden.

Best of luck to you both with your research!



## Lancet UK Public Health Science Conference 2024

Congratulations to Carolyn Ingram, who presented her PhD research at the Lancet UK Public Health Science conference in November 2024, and won runner up for best oral presentation prize!

The accompanying abstract with Dr Conor Buggy and Dr Carla Perrotta was published in the Lancet.

## Common Assessment of Practice Placement Performance and Professionalism Competencies across Dietetic Programmes

In Ireland there are four higher education providers (HEI's) which, on successful completion, lead to eligibility for graduates to register with CORU as a Dietitian. TUD hosts the only undergraduate programme; UCD, UL and UCC host postgraduate programmes. Currently each programme has unique placement assessment forms and portfolios of evidence. All programmes ensure that students demonstrate competence in practice placements but do so in subtly different ways.

There are obvious issues with duplication of work for example, but also for sites taking students from multiple HEI's. The professional organisation in the UK, the BDA, is working towards common assessment across a significant number of HEI's and have done extensive scoping work and a SWOT analysis.

The Irish Nutrition & Dietetic Institute is highly supportive of common assessment. In an effort to work towards the development of common assessment in Ireland, all HEI's began collaborating. At a meeting in UL on Nov 14th, significant progress was made on defining and agreeing competence domains. A significant body of work remains to be done and UL successfully applied for and achieved funding from the HSCP office for 0.2 FTE Dietetic Tutor specified purpose contract to partially address this need. All HEI's look forward to moving on to the next stage of engaging with Practice Educators in January and thereafter students past and present.



*Dietetic history being made in Limerick!*

*Pictured l-r: Grainne Quinlan UL, Edel Ganter UCC, Ruth Charles UCD, Claire Molloy UL (online), Audrey Lyons UL, Maria Bowles UL, Annelie Shaw UCD (absent Annmarie Bennett TUD)*



The UCD PLAN'EAT Living Lab is a research initiative based in the UCD Institute of Food and Health that is focused on supporting UCD students' transition towards more sustainable and healthy diets. Healthy UCD was delighted to collaborate with the PLAN'EAT team when they hosted the UCD Sustainable Food Fest in the Innovation Academy on Tuesday November 26th 2024.

The event was opened by the Vice President for UCD Sustainability, Professor Tasman Crowe, and was followed by interactive workshops from Airfield Estate and The Rediscovery Centre. The event was supported by several health- and sustainability-focused organisations across campus, including UCD Sustainability, the UCD Institute of Food and Health, the Co-Centre for Sustainable Food Systems, and the UCD Nutrition, Sustainability and Horticulture societies.

## Career Evenings for BSc Sport & Exercise Management and BSc Health & Performance Science Students

We were delighted to welcome alumni and industry professionals to UCD in November and December 2024 for a series of two Sports Career Evenings.

Current students got to hear about the career pathways that our alumni have taken since graduating from UCD, and learned key insights from industry experts.

Both events were followed by networking opportunities where students spoke directly to panelists about their own potential career plans.

Huge thanks to everyone who attended and, in particular, to our panelists for sharing their stories and wisdom.



BSc Sport & Exercise Management Career Evening, November 2024



BSc Health & Performance Science Career Evening, December 2024



## Graduate Programmes: Apply Now



The UCD School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science offers a wide range of graduate programmes across all of our disciplines and at various levels.

Courses range from short-term Certificates to part-time Professional to two-year full-time Masters programmes.

Full information, including application requirements and deadlines, are available [here](#). International students can find more information about studying at UCD [here](#).

# Developing and Progressing Links with Sustainable Food Systems and Enhancing Student Competence in Food Service Provision to Healthcare

As part of the Module Practice Placement 1 in the MSc Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics programme, students are required to demonstrate CORU mandated competencies: a) an understanding of food legislation and food safety in the context of nutrition and dietetic practice, and b) knowledge of food preparation and the principles of food service processes including recipe development, documentation and standardisation, menu ordering, manual and electronic systems, procurement, preparation, meal assembly, distribution, and waste management. Each Autumn, the programme placement team recruits at least 12 large-scale, usually hospital-based, catering services capable of providing the learning opportunities that facilitate competence achievement.



*Pictured (l-r): Yvonne Hickey Senior Dietitian SVUH, Ryan Sheridan Catering SVUH, David Fields Catering SVUH, students Leah Cragie and Alix Mooney Year 1 MSc Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics. This project was undertaken in the Catering department at SVUH, where students Leah and Alix updated the menu database resource to ensure an accurate reflection of ingredients and recipes and provided recommendations to the Catering and Dietetic departments based on the analysis.*

Students pairs undertake a specific research or audit project identified by the Catering Manager in collaboration with the local Dietetic Service, whenever possible. The project outcomes provide substantial, valuable, highly relevant data. In 2024, the placement team hosted an event at UCD which was live streamed. The class presented their project findings to the programme team and Catering and Dietetic staff members involved in their placements.

All students are encouraged to submit their poster to the research symposium hosted by the Irish Nutrition & Dietetic Institute in March. The programme team aims to host this presentation event annually. Furthermore, in line with the programme team's attempts to promote sustainable food systems, incoming students undertaking Catering placement in 2025 will build on the outcomes and recommendations from the previous year's projects.

These opportunities equip our students to collaborate and communicate effectively with teams and to understand the need to monitor, evaluate, and audit the quality of practice, be able to critically evaluate their own practice against evidence-based standards, and implement improvements based on the findings of these audits and reviews. The programme team wishes to acknowledge and sincerely thank all the Catering and Dietetic sites and staff who have contributed to student training since the programme's inception in 2016.

## School Athena Swan Process Update

The Athena SWAN Charter is a framework established to promote gender equality and inclusivity within higher education and research institutions. The School was awarded the Athena SWAN Bronze Award in 2021. We are currently preparing our new application for submission later this Spring.



As part of this process, the School is conducting an audit of activities and engaging with students and staff through surveys and interviews. This process is being led by Prof Akke Vellinga, Associate Dean for EDI, and supported by colleagues from across the School.

# RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- ASPHER Core Curriculum for Public Health, Core Curriculum Programme for Public Health, Brussels; ASPHER; 2024; eISSN 2990-8876; DOI:[10.13140/RG.2.2.32580.23689](https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.32580.23689)
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# CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

## **EUPHA Conference Lisbon November 2024**

### **Abstracts published in *European Journal of Public Health*, Volume 34, Issue Supplement\_3, November 2024**

Conyard, K.F., Codd, M.B., Mason-Jones, A., Cunningham, C. & Middleton, J. Public Health In Conflict And War: A Response To An Ever Evolving Landscape.

Fox P, Jalal R, Fitzpatrick P, Frazer K, Kavanagh L, Collins MB, Kennedy U, TMcCarthy T, Quirke B, Joye R. <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/ckae144.2044>

Jalili, P., Conyard, K.F., Wall, P., Gormley, E. & Codd, M.B. Wellbeing, career satisfaction, and educational requirements in healthcare assistants in Ireland.

Kumawat, J., Conyard, K., Wall, P. & Codd, M. 2024, "Enhancing Interprofessional Skills with 'The Resilience Edge': A Pilot Study on Mental Well-being at UCD.

Kumawat, J., Codd, M., Loughrey, J., Scrivener, A., Coulahan, P., Gormley, E. & Wall, P. Investigating Transmission Patterns and Genome Sequencing of SARS-CoV-2 in University College Dublin.

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Loughrey, J., Codd, M., Wall, P., Gormley, E., Conyard, K., Jalili, P. & Kumawat, J. 2024, "An international comparison of Long-term Care Facility outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic.

O'Flynn A, Fitzpatrick P, Jalal R, Frazer K, Joye R, Collins MB, Kavanagh L, McCarthy T, McEnery M, Fox P. Uptake of cervical screening and acceptability of HPV self-sampling in Irish Traveller women. <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/ckae144.941>

Organised by: ASPHER, Faculty of Public Health (UK) & Chair persons: Alison Mc Callum (UK), Judit Simon (Austria) and ASPHER Core Curriculum Expert Consultative Group 2024. 9.X.2. Activating the ASPHER-WHO Public Health Core Curriculum: Interprofessional Skills.

## **Faculty of Public Health Medicine, Winter Scientific Meeting, Dublin December 2024**

Adebayo O, Waters A, Fitzpatrick P, Keogh M. Diversity Of Blood Antigens Phenotypes in Irish Blood Donors.

Conyard, K.F., Codd, M.B., Mason-Jones, A., Cunningham, C. & Middleton, J. Beyond the Battlefield' : Educating Public Health Professionals on the Impact of Conflict and War.

Fitzpatrick P, O'Flynn A, Jalal R, Frazer K, Joye R, Collins MB, Kavanagh L, Quirke B, Kennedy U, McCarthy C, McEnery M, Lyng A, Fox P. Smoking and vaping prevalence and awareness of cancer risk and identification of the current barriers and facilitators to cancer screening among Irish Travellers.

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Loughrey, J., Wall, P. & Codd, M. Relationships between regulatory Inspections and COVID-19 outcomes in Irish nursing homes.

Luong D., Millar S., Otvos J., Perry IJ., Phillips CM. Association between American Heart Association Ideal Cardiovascular Health Metrics and Lipid Biomarkers of Cardiovascular Disease.

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## Institute Research Showcase December 2024

Fallon C, Cunningham C, Horner H, Corish C. POWER Study: physical function, nutritional status and dietary intake of adults aged 70+ at risk of sarcopenia

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