Our first newsletter of 2014 is again packed with news from our busy school.

In this edition you can read about the new HSE/DCU programme to build the research capacity of nurses in the Dublin North region (see page 2). As a school we continue to participate in innovative research studies. Recently researchers from the school led by Prof Anne Scott participated in a European study that received much media attention. This study highlighted the link between nursing staffing levels and education on reducing patients deaths post operatively. See page 3 for more details.

This spring we will host two diverse conferences. In March the 3rd Sexuality Conference takes place and we are confident that it will be a thought provoking and enjoyable event (see page 3).

In April our Psychology Students host the Annual Congress of Psychology Students which is an event for both undergraduate and postgraduate students. We look forward to welcoming visitors to this exciting conference. To book please visit www.dcu.ie/snhs/news/feb/psychology-congress2014.shtml

Places are still available for our Qualitative Summer Research School in early May (see page 4). This popular interdisciplinary event brings international and national qualitative scholars and researchers together.

Enjoy the read!

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A partnership initiative between the School of Nursing and Human Sciences DCU led by Dr Mary Rose Sweeney and Professor Anthony Staines and the Nursing Midwifery Planning and Development Unit Dublin North led by Ms Eithne Cusack has commenced a research programme to build clinical research capacity within nursing and midwifery services in North Dublin. This initiative proposes to address the recommendations related to research skill development made from the Scape Study (2010) that evaluated Clinical Nurse Specialist and Midwife Specialist and Advanced Nurse and Midwife roles in Ireland. The aim of the programme is to lead relevant quality research that informs and enhances patient outcomes, practice development and healthcare policy.

The research programme will enhance and develop the research role, profile, skills, research experience and output of clinical nursing and midwifery staff by supporting nurses and midwives in research progression. Support is being provided on specific research skills such as research proposal development, study design, data collection and data analysis, grant writing, publication of results, and translation of research to practice through one to one and collective research meetings, workshops, presentations and seminars. Nurses and midwives who participate in the research programme will have the opportunity to showcase their research outcomes at a clinical nursing and midwifery research conference for Dublin North Services in June 2014.

Dr Linda Nugent (pictured opposite) is a post doctoral nurse researcher who is responsible for the implementation of the project. This programme is currently working to increase research activity and embed a research culture in clinical nursing services in Dublin North. The research programme will provide focus for the development of an environment that can support and sustain research activities of nurses necessary to advancement of patient care, quality and safety.

A nursing conference to showcase clinical nursing research is being held on the 12th June 2014 in the School of Nursing & Human Sciences. Professor Anne Scott will be delivering a keynote address.

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This innovative conference is for those in the Humanities, Social Sciences and Health disciplines. The programme includes 60 speakers, 3 plenaries, 3 workshops, 1 roundtable and includes a master class on Classical Music, Poetry and Sexuality by Prof. Benjamin Dwyer Aosdana and the University of Middlesex, Dr Kimberly Campanello, Middlesex University, UK and Donnacha Dwyer, uilleann pipe, Dublin, Ireland.

School of Nursing and Human Sciences Researchers part of European Study reporting that better nurse staffing and education reduces patient deaths in European Hospitals

A recent Lancet paper presenting the results of a study in 9 European countries documented that hospital nurse staffing and the proportion of nurses with bachelor’s education are associated with significantly fewer deaths after common surgery. A team of researchers led by the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing in the U.S. and Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium, and including Prof Anne Scott, Prof Anthony Staines, Dr Marcia Kirwan and Dr Anne Matthews from School of Nursing and Human Sciences, found that every one patient increase in patient to nurse ratios was associated with a 7% increase in deaths, while having a better educated nurse workforce is associated with fewer deaths. Every 10% increase in bachelor’s degree nurses is associated with a 7% decline in mortality.

This study of close to a half million surgical patients found that patients in hospitals in which 60% of nurses had bachelor’s degrees and cared for an average of six patients, had nearly a one-third lower risk of death after common inpatient surgical procedures than patients in hospitals where half as many nurses had bachelor’s degrees and cared for an average of eight patients each.

The RN4CAST study, funded by the European Union and the National Institute of Nursing Research, National Institutes of Health, concluded that in Europe, as in the U.S., failing to invest in bachelor’s nurse education and attempts to cut costs by reducing nurse staffing may put hospitalized patients at greater risk of dying.

“This study draws attention to the importance of examining both patient-to-nurse ratios and the education levels of nursing staff in our hospitals, and in the individual wards in those hospitals, as a possible means of improving patient outcomes,” said Prof Anne Scott. “Ireland has invested in nurse education since the Commission on Nursing in 1998. It is now time to recognize that nurse education levels are linked to patient outcomes. Our results suggest that the assumption that hospital nurse staffing can be reduced to save money without adversely affecting patient outcomes may be misguided at best, and fatal at worst. This is crucial information for hospital managers given the significant reduction in nurse staffing in Irish hospitals since 2008, and particularly in light of the ongoing moratorium on staffing.”

For additional information, refer to www.rn4cast.eu or contact Prof Anne Scott, Dublin City University: anne.scott@dcu.ie
To celebrate the recent accreditation of the M.Sc. in Psychotherapy by the Irish Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy, a public lecture was delivered by Professor Colin Feltham, Emeritus Professor, Sheffield-Hallam University, entitled 'Unhappitants of Today’s Earth: How can the psychological therapies respond?'. This thought-provoking lecture invited participants to consider the contribution that psychotherapy can make to geo-random outbreaks of marked human suffering.

He reflected on extreme weather events, wars and terrorism which have led to mass deaths, homelessness, violence and trauma and suggested that psychotherapists may be facing new epidemics of psychological challenges. He suggested that proponents of psychotherapy would like to offer more help but are under-funded and may be too bogged down in their own intra-professional problems. He questioned if traditional one-to-one therapy could meet the scale of such problems, many of them with new, local and urgent characteristics.

This celebratory event was attended by Professor John Costello, Dean of the Faculty of Science and Health and the President of DCU, Professor Brian MacCraith who talked about the M.Sc. in Psychotherapy making a contribution to the DCU strategic plan in terms of transforming lives and making a contribution to DCU in the community. He congratulated the psychotherapy programme team, Rita Glover, Dr. Gerry Moore, Dr. Evelyn Gordon and Dr. Rosaleen McElvaney on their achievement in attaining IACP accreditation and how this is of benefit to students and to clients. Attaining IACP accreditation is a significant achievement which will raise the profile and standing of the M.Sc. in Psychotherapy programme across Ireland and internationally. It will make the path to accreditation for our students simpler and will enhance their future employment prospects.

For more information
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In 2009 DCU and Special Olympics Ireland signed a Memorandum of Understanding to provide a framework through which the parties could encourage and facilitate collaboration in research, volunteer initiatives, and the sharing of facilities and expertise. This MOU was extended last year and the School of Nursing and Human Sciences continues to make significant contributions to keeping the spirit of the MOU alive and well. As a member of the DCU working group with Special Olympics I wanted to keep you up to date on activities. The working group meet every three months and have representatives from across the University. While here in the School we currently have a research project taking place we also have a significant amount of additional on-going activities. Individual staff members have supported Special Olympics with practical issues such as IT support and facilitating the use of rooms for events and training. Our students have been involved in fundraising in the past and most recently in volunteering. Students from the Health and Society Programmes will be commencing volunteer placements shortly. At the Special Olympic Ireland games in Limerick next June some of our nursing students will be working as part of the Healthy Athlete Programme. I volunteered recently at a swimming event and was impressed with the organisation in general but most of all by the athletes themselves as they prepared for the games in June.

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7th Qualitative Summer School to be held in May 2014

We are pleased to announce that our qualitative research summer school will run again in May 2014. There will be nine different workshops led by an established figure in their field of qualitative research over the four day event.

For further details and to book places please visit:
DCU’s Healthy Living Centre (HLC) showcased an extension of its health care services at a community event recently. In attendance, former governor of Mountjoy, Mr. John Lonergan discussed the important role the innovative facility is playing in promoting physical and mental wellbeing in the community, and nationally.

Part of the School of Nursing and Human Sciences, the HLC offers a unique integration of health care education and research. The center aims to address the priority needs and gaps as identified through a process of consultation with local GPs, the acute sector and primary care providers.

The event provided the university population, and the local community, with an opportunity to explore the HLC’s purpose-built facility and the services it provides, including:

- Counselling and Psychotherapy
- General Health Screening (Cholesterol, BMI, Blood Pressure etc.)
- Memory Screening
- Nutrition and Dietetics
- Sports Injury Assessment and Treatment (In association with ExWell Medical)
- Neurofeedback Services for improving brain function
- GP and Phlebotomy Services
- Occupational Health Risk Management

DCU’s Healthy Living Centre is open 8am – 8pm Monday to Thursday. Contact us on 01-700 7171 and ‘Like’ us on Facebook to get regular updates on each clinic.
DCU Students Present at Conference

Students from the School of Nursing and Human Sciences are to present at the AHEAD Conference on 18\textsuperscript{th} March 2014. AHEAD is the Association for Higher Access and Disability and works to promote full access to and participation in further and higher education for students with disabilities. Full details of the conference are available on http://www.ahead.ie/annualconference2014.

The students are undertaking a module “Improving Service with Cooperative Learning” and are representing the current group of students and St. Joseph’s Intellectual Disability Service. The team of students presenting will have a person with intellectual disability, a family and staff member and the title of the talk is “People with Intellectual Disability, Staff and Families working together to improve Services”. Supported by the module coordinator (Deirdre Corby) the team will join an interesting group of presenters and contributors to the conference. They will give a summary of the project they are currently working on while highlighting the commitment required from students and service providers to make the module successful.

If interested in learning more about the module please read the following article:


FRED & ALICE—LOVE IN THE TIME OF OCD

A play presented by the Callback Theatre Company
in the The Venue
The Hub
Dublin City University

On the 26th of March, at 13.30pm
(doors open at 1pm and close at 1.25pm)

Fred & Alice is a quirky, powerful, heartfelt Love Story. It is hilarious with mischievous characters, with charming, humorous dialogue and fantastic choreography. Fred and Alice meet in a mental health hostel, as their stories unfold we come to understand the powerful reasons that have brought them there. As their love flourishes, so too does their need to live independently, this play tells the story of that journey. Seeing the world through Fred and Alice’s eyes teaches us to value difference as something special and unique, to understand the healing power of love and understanding in a world that sometimes drives us crazy and restores our faith in our human capacity to protect ourselves from hurt and to flourish and recover.

Admission is free to staff and students in the School of Nursing & Human Sciences but booking is essential as places are limited.
To book a place please email: audrey.leonard@dcu.ie before the 21st of March.
The School of Nursing and Human Sciences held its 3rd annual Teaching and Learning Spring School on Thursday 6th and Friday 7th February, an event that is now firmly established in our calendar. The theme this year was ‘Connected Teaching: issues and challenges’. Our keynote address, ‘Developing a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning’, was delivered by Mick Healey, higher education consultant and Emeritus Professor at the University of Gloucestershire. Professor Healey (pictured centre above) also ran an interesting and thought-provoking half-day workshop on the concept of students as change agents.

In addition, a number of colleagues shared elements of their teaching practises relating directly to the overall theme. Our thanks to the following presenters: Teresa Burke, Briege Casey, Joanne Cleary-Holdforth and Therese Leufer, Raphaela Kane and Paul Caffrey, Michael Keane, Deborah Keogh, Evelyn Kelleher, Anne Kirwan, Anne Matthews and Martin Molony.
During Semester one 2013-2014, 15 students from the 3rd and 4th years in the BSc in Psychology Program participated in the “Behavioural Neuroscience Laboratory Practice: Basic Techniques and Research Methods of the Brain and Behaviour” module (NS4539). This elective module, which is being offered for the first time, was led by 3rd and 4th year Psychology students. Module Co-ordinator is Dr. Stella Vlachou, Lecturer in Psychology at the SNHS and Director of the Preclinical Division of the Behavioural Neuroscience Laboratory at DCU.

This elective module is important for psychology students who are interested in behavioural neuroscience, as it is the only module that gives them the opportunity to learn about and practice on basic techniques used in behavioural neuroscience already at an undergraduate level.

Students had to “set sail for their own Ithaca”, as the Greek poet Constantinos P. Kavafis would have said, through this module. Throughout the semester, the students attended a number of lectures, but, most importantly, they were able to work in the Preclinical Division of the Behavioural Neuroscience Laboratory in two different lab research groups. During the lectures, students were taught, among others, about main research principles in basic behavioural neuroscience: experimental procedures in behavioural neuroscience, ethical issues of preclinical research, main laboratory procedures/techniques, general laboratory procedures in physiology of behaviour.

Lab practicals were held on a weekly basis during the second half of the semester. A considerable amount of preparation and coordination was required for a smooth process during the lab practicals and the students were respectful and fully compliant with the guidelines for them. Importantly, the focus of the lab practicals was, firstly, on the detailed presentation of basic behavioural procedures in neuroscience.

These included, but were not restricted to:

- measure human-like symptomatology and behavioural characteristics, such as the self-administration procedure and its applications,
- the intra-cranial self-stimulation procedure,
- the elevated-plus maze; and
- the forced-swim test.

Students were familiarised with these procedures through their strong collaborative contribution to the analysis of relevant fictional data and the presentation of findings in lab reports.

Although the schedule and workload for this module was demanding and intense for the students, they successfully completed it, and reached one step closer to their own Ithaca “wiser and with so much experience” (C.P. Kavafis, Ithaca, 1911).

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Group 1 - From left: (upper) Aly Egan (3rd year), Diego Garaialde (4th year), Elaine Reilly (3rd year), Niamh Catherine Moran (3rd year); (lower) Charlotte Rispin (4th year), Dr. Stella Vlachou, Cora Keeney (3rd year)

Group 2 - From left: (upper) Terry McElvaney (3rd year), Alan Mc Kay (4th year), Conor Mahon (3rd year), Rory Boyle (4th year; INTRA 2013), Brian Mackey (3rd year; INTRA 2014); (lower) Edel Doherty (3rd year), Derbhla Farrell (3rd year), Dr. Stella Vlachou. Absent from photo shoot: Kate Toland (3rd year); Timothy O’Brien (3rd year)