

Cancer Research @UCC

Annual Report 2025



Connecting Research and Patients
Accelerating cancer discovery



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Who We Are

Cancer Research @UCC is a leading translational cancer research centre, accelerating scientific discoveries to the clinic to change outcomes for people affected by cancer.

Cancer Research @UCC brings together a multidisciplinary community of scientists, clinicians, data specialists, patient partners, and administrative professionals to accelerate cancer discoveries from concept to patient impact.

We are the Futures Strategic Research Centre for cancer at University College Cork and the dedicated research arm of the CUH/UCC Cancer Centre. As a fully integrated academic-clinical hub, we provide the infrastructure, expertise, and leadership required to deliver high-quality, patient-centred cancer research at scale across the region.

Cancer Research @UCC is the academic home of the UCC Cancer Trials Group, a HRB- and HSE-supported network leading oncology clinical research across the South of Ireland. Through Cork University Hospital, University Hospital Waterford, and Bon Secours Cork Cancer Centre, the group expands equitable patient access to innovative therapies through a diverse and growing portfolio of clinical trials with the patient voice embedded at every stage.

As an enabling hub, we strengthen governance, support Investigator-led studies, build shared capability, and drive collaboration aligned with international best practice. Our work is powered by four integrated programmes: Strategy & Impact, Translational Accelerator, Trials Operations Excellence, and Research Talent Development.



Vision & Mission

Our Vision

Shaping the future of cancer care

Cancer Research @UCC will be a leader in developing and delivering next generation cancer treatments to patients.

Our Mission

From discovery to patient impact

Our mission is to unite multidisciplinary expertise, cutting-edge research, and the patient voice to accelerate the delivery of cancer discoveries from bench to bedside. We will advance cancer diagnostics, therapeutics and interventions to save lives and improve quality of life for people affected by cancer.

Our Strengths

Bridge between academia and health

Bridging research and care, where academia meets the clinic.

We are the only multidisciplinary cancer focused research centre nationally that seamlessly connects academic research with clinical practice and clinical trials, fostering collaboration to bring innovative diagnostics, treatments and interventions to patient care.

Faster, Smarter Research

Accelerating impact through efficiency

We are committed to streamlining the cancer research pathway. Through close collaboration with our partners, we aim to accelerate our research timelines, bringing our research to our community faster.

The Patient Voice

Research shaped by lived experience.

We actively integrate the patient perspective into every stage of research, ensuring that our work is aligned with the needs and experiences of those affected by cancer.



Everything we do is focused on one goal: accelerating cancer research that delivers meaningful impact for patients.



Our Team

Our people are our greatest asset. Cancer Research @UCC brings together a dynamic, multidisciplinary team working collaboratively to tackle the complexity of cancer biology and treatment, translating discovery into real patient impact.

Our People at a Glance

We combine expertise in laboratory science, clinical practice, and translational research, creating an environment that values shared knowledge, collaboration and innovation.

Director	Provides strategic leadership for Cancer Research @UCC, setting priorities, building partnerships, and ensuring the delivery of high impact, patient focused research
Principal Investigators	Academic and clinical leaders who design and deliver high quality cancer research programmes, secure competitive funding, mentor teams, and drive excellence across discovery, translational, and clinical research.
Operations & Management Team	Enable research success by overseeing operations, infrastructure, governance, and compliance ensuring studies are delivered efficiently and to the highest standards.
Clinical Trials Staff	Plan, coordinate, and deliver cancer clinical trials, working closely with investigators and clinical teams to translate research into improved patient care.
Network Investigators	Collaborators who contribute to Centre-led research initiatives, including infrastructure awards and multicentre studies, strengthening regional and national research impact.
Fellows, PhD & Postdoctoral Researchers	Early and mid career researchers generating new knowledge, contributing to publications, and building the next generation of cancer research leadership.
Strategic Support Roles	Specialist roles supporting strategy, partnerships, innovation, communications, and regional and national integration.
Retired & Emeritus Members	Former academic and clinical leaders who continue to contribute mentorship, expertise, and institutional knowledge.
Patient & Public Involvement (PPI) Members	People with lived experience of cancer who work alongside researchers to ensure research priorities, design, and delivery reflect patient needs and outcomes.



Welcome from the Director

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Cancer Research @UCC Annual Report, which captures our performance, progress, and impact across 2025 and the first quarter of 2026.

This report reflects a period of significant momentum for the Centre marked by strengthened partnerships, research excellence, and a growing focus on delivering meaningful impact for patients across our region.

From 2025 onwards, this report will be published annually, providing a consistent and transparent account of our performance, progress, and priorities. It is an important opportunity to reflect on what we have achieved together, and to look ahead to the next phase of our development.

I am deeply grateful to University College Cork for its continued support and for formally designating Cancer Research @UCC as a Futures Strategic Research Centre for cancer. This recognition affirms the strength of our vision and our central role in delivering interdisciplinary, translational, and patient-centred cancer research. It also provides a powerful platform to further accelerate our work and strengthen our regional and national impact.

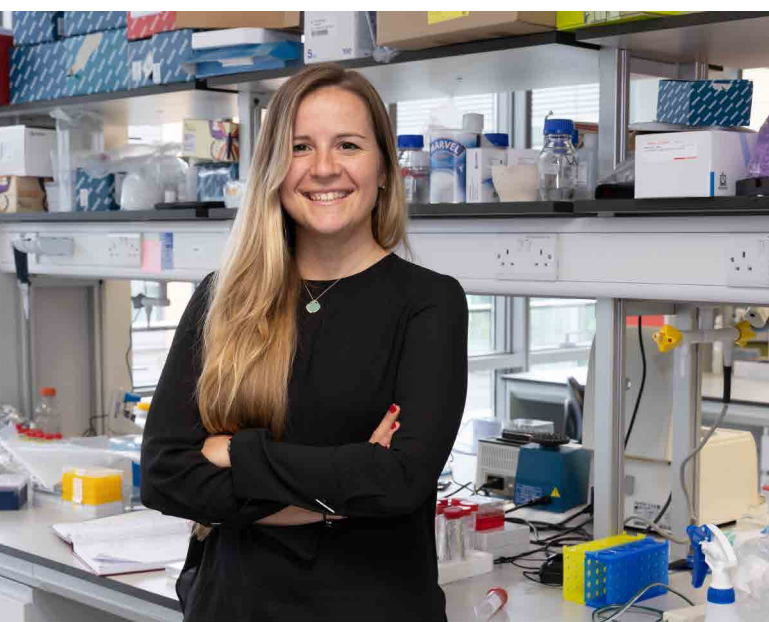
Over the past year, we have seen excellent research activity across the Centre, spanning discovery science, translational research, and clinical trials. Of particular importance has been the continued strengthening of collaboration with the OECl-accredited CUH/UCC Cancer Centre, enabling closer alignment between research and clinical care. This integrated academic-clinical partnership is critical to ensuring that innovation reaches patients faster and more effectively.

Looking ahead, Cancer Research @UCC is firmly focused on making a tangible regional impact in cancer research. We are committed to building capacity, supporting our research community, expanding access to clinical trials, and training the next generation of clinician-scientists who will drive innovation in cancer care and research. We are also committed to embedding the patient voice at every stage of our work. With strong partnerships, a growing and diverse team, and a shared sense of purpose, we are well positioned to deliver on this ambition.

I would like to sincerely thank our researchers, clinicians, trial teams, professional staff, patient partners, funders, donors and collaborators. Your dedication, expertise, and commitment are the foundation of everything we achieve.

I hope this report provides a clear and compelling picture of our progress and of the opportunity ahead as we continue to shape the future of cancer research and care together.

Professor Roisin Connolly
Director, Cancer Research @UCC



Dr Laia Raigal, Programme Manager, Cancer Research @UCC

Cancer Research @UCC's ambition is clear: to accelerate high quality, patient centred cancer research and deliver real impact for our region. To achieve this, we have established a clear, structured framework that translates strategy into delivery.

At the heart of this framework are four integrated programmes. Together, they provide the leadership, infrastructure, coordination, and capability required to enable excellence across discovery, translation, clinical trials, and talent development.

These programmes are not standalone initiatives. They are interconnected, mutually reinforcing, and outcome focused designed to support our researchers, clinicians, trial teams, and partners at every stage of the research pathway, from concept to patient impact.

Our Programmes

Turning strategy into action

As Programme Manager, I work closely with programme leads, working groups, and our academic-clinical leadership to ensure these programmes are actively delivered, measured, and continuously strengthened. Each programme has clear objectives, defined actions, and a robust KPI framework to track progress and inform decision making.

The following pages set out the progress achieved in 2025 and Q1 2026, alongside our plans for the year ahead, for each of the four programmes.

1

Strategy & Impact Programme

2

Translational Accelerator Programme

3

Trials Operations Excellence Programme

4

Research Talent Development Programme

The Four Programmes Powering Cancer Research @UCC

1

Strategy & Impact Programme

Setting direction. Building visibility. Enabling growth.

This programme provides strategic coherence, strong governance, sustainable funding pathways, and effective engagement with internal and external stakeholders.

It ensures Cancer Research @UCC is well positioned, clearly communicated, and aligned with UCC Futures, UCC Strategy 2028, and the CUH/UCC Cancer Centre.

2

Translational Accelerator Programme

From concept to clinic – faster.

Focused on accelerating Investigator-led translational research, this programme strengthens pathways from discovery to implementation.

It supports early stage ideas, embeds patient and public involvement, and maximises shared translational infrastructure to deliver tangible patient benefit.

3

Trials Operations Excellence Programme

Delivering high quality trials at scale.

This programme enhances the systems, processes, and infrastructure that underpin cancer clinical trials delivery across our regional network.

It is central to increasing patient access to trials, improving efficiency, and supporting investigator leadership while maintaining the highest regulatory and quality standards.

4

Research Talent Development Programme

Building the future cancer research workforce

This programme supports researchers at all career stages through structured training, mentorship, and career development pathways.

A key focus is attracting, developing, and supporting the next generation of clinician scientists, while retaining exceptional talent and fostering a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable cancer research ecosystem.

Looking Ahead

Together, these four programmes enable the Cancer Research @UCC Framework and provide a practical, measurable route to impact. They support our ambition to strengthen regional cancer research capacity, accelerate innovation, and improve outcomes for patients.

The next section of this report explores each programme in detail highlighting key achievements, lessons learned, and priorities for the future.



Strategy & Impact Programme

The Strategy & Impact Programme provides the strategic backbone of Cancer Research @UCC.

It ensures clear direction, strong governance, sustainable funding pathways, and effective engagement with internal and external stakeholders.

Programme Leads Prof Roisin Connolly, Prof Mark Tangney, Dr Laia Raigal

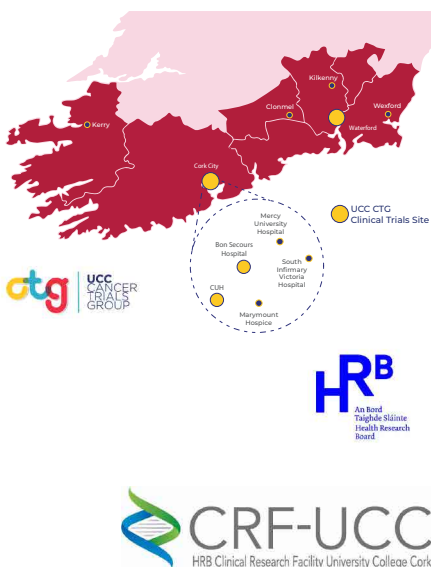
UCCFUTURES

Securing **Our Future** Through Research Excellence

Futures Strategic Research Centre

Cancer Research @UCC has been formally recognised as one of **UCC Futures' Strategic Research Centres**, reflecting its pivotal role in advancing interdisciplinary, translational and patient centred cancer research.

As a leading research hub within UCC's College of Medicine and Health, the centre brings together laboratory scientists, clinicians and patient partners to accelerate the translation of discoveries from bench to bedside.



Framework and Governance

The Strategy & Impact Programme has developed the **Cancer Research @UCC Framework (2025–2030)** which provides a clear organisational, governance and delivery architecture for the work of the Centre in collaboration with regional healthcare partners.

The UCC Cancer Trials Group (UCC CTG) is a cancer trials network headquartered at Cancer Research @UCC. Backed by significant funding from the Health Research Board (HRB), it unites clinical and translational cancer research across the South and South-West of Ireland to provide patients with greater access to trials.

The UCC CTG collaborates with the HRB Clinical Research Facility-UCC (HRB CRF-UCC) and operates across regional oncology clinical trials units including at the CUH/UCC Cancer Centre, University Hospital Waterford, and the Bon Secours Cork Cancer Centre.

€10 Million Funding Boost To Connect Cancer Patients with Clinical Trials

Over the coming five years a **€10 million investment**, composed of clinical trial revenue and philanthropy, will see a project spearheaded by Cancer Research @UCC which will provide a streamlined connection between the latest cancer research and regional cancer centres; providing state-of-the-art clinical trials to patients in the wider Cork region.



L-R John O'Halloran (President, UCC) Jennifer Kearney (CEO, CUH), Roisin Connolly, (Director, Cancer Research @UCC) Minister Jerry Buttimer, Helen Whelton (Head College of Medicine and Health, UCC)

Working with the HSE South West and our primary cancer centre partner at Cork University Hospital, we are developing a research ecosystem that brings the latest international cancer research direct to those at risk of or living with a cancer diagnosis.

It is a decisive step in advancing Ireland's long-term national ambition, with initiatives targeting areas such as cancer therapeutics, the cancer microbiome and supports for patients to live well with and beyond a cancer diagnosis. Fostering collaboration between scientists, clinicians, industry, charity partners, and patient advocacy organisations, the initiative will improve patient outcomes, reinforcing the region's position as a leader in healthcare innovation.

Leading Immunotherapy Expert Appointed to UPMC Oncology Professorship



L-R Eimear Keohane (Alumni and Development, UCC), Anna Olsson-Brown (UPMC Professor of Cancer Clinical Trials), Roisin Connolly (Director Cancer Research @UCC), Mary Hicky (UPMC)

Cancer Research @UCC has welcomed the appointment of **Professor Anna Olsson-Brown** as UPMC Professor of Cancer Clinical Trials, completing the recruitment of two oncology professorships funded by UPMC in collaboration with the National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP).

Professor Olsson-Brown is a Consultant Medical Oncologist with internationally recognised expertise in the systemic treatment of skin cancers, immunotherapy-related toxicities, early-phase clinical trials and acute oncology. She joined UCC from the Sussex Cancer Centre, where she served as Clinical Director for Clinical Cancer Services.

Supported by HSE South West and the NCCP, the professorship will enhance collaboration between UCC, Cork University Hospital and leading international partners, including UPMC and the UPMC Hillman Cancer Center in Pittsburgh.

This appointment further strengthens the University's commitment to advancing cancer research, expanding clinical trial activity and improving outcomes for patients.



Translational Accelerator Programme

The Translational Accelerator Programme enables high impact, investigator-led translational cancer research at Cancer Research @UCC.

Its purpose is to strengthen the pathway from early scientific discovery to clinical application, ensuring promising ideas are supported, developed, and accelerated toward patient benefit.

Programme Leads Prof Jack Gleeson, Dr Erin Crowley

Accelerating Investigator-led Clinical Research

A core objective of the **Translational Accelerator Programme** is to strengthen the pathway from scientific discovery to clinical implementation by enabling investigator-led research to progress more rapidly from concept development to study activation.

Through a strategic partnership between Cancer Research @UCC, our clinical partners and the HRB CRF-UCC, researchers are supported with expertise in study design, biostatistics, data management, regulatory affairs, quality management and study monitoring; providing a coordinated framework for the development of high-quality academic clinical and translational research.

The Translational Accelerator Programme, co-led by **Professor Jack Gleeson** and **Dr Erin Crowley**, is strengthening the pathway from research discovery to clinical implementation. A cornerstone of this effort is the Academic Study Coordinator post, held by Dr Crowley and jointly funded by Cancer Research @UCC and the HRB CRF-UCC. The role provides dedicated support to investigators throughout study development and set-up, helping to navigate governance, regulatory and operational requirements, build institutional capacity for investigator-led research, and accelerate the activation of high-impact academic studies.



L-R Mary Glass, Jack Gleeson, Claire Brady, Brendan Palmer, Erin Crowley, Darren Dahly, Vitaliy Myktyiv

The Programme also fosters multidisciplinary collaboration through initiatives such as the Brain Tumour Research Networking Events, which bring together clinicians, researchers and translational scientists to develop new research programmes and catalyse investigator-led clinical studies.

These collaborative activities are helping to build a sustainable pipeline of academic trials originating from discoveries made within Cancer Research @UCC.

Investigator-Led Studies Opened or Advanced in 2024-2025

During 2024-2025, five Investigator-led studies were opened or progressed through study set-up, representing a diverse portfolio of observational and interventional research supported by national, international and philanthropic funding sources.

Investigator-Led Research Activity

Study	PI	Sponsor	Funding	Type	Recruitment Target
IMPROVE TMZ	Prof Jack Gleeson	University College Cork	UCC Internal Award	Observational	55
MINA	Prof Roisin Connolly	University College Cork	Breast Cancer Research Foundation	Observational	30
DEFINITIVE	Prof Roisin Connolly	FRCB Barcelona	EU Horizon	Interventional	21
PinPoint	Dr Dearbhaile Collins	Trinity College Dublin	Health Research Board	Observational	60
AI Microscope Study	Dr Vitaliy Mykytiv	University College Cork	Tyndall National Institute	Observational	50

Collectively, these studies target enrolment of more than 200 patients and demonstrate the growing capacity of Cancer Research @UCC investigators to attract competitive funding and translate innovative research concepts into clinical studies.

Accelerating Academic Trial Activation

A core objective of the Translational Accelerator Programme is to accelerate the progression of investigator-led studies from research concept to clinical implementation.

During 2025, the Programme commenced a structured evaluation of the investigator-led study pathway to establish baseline activation metrics, identify operational bottlenecks, and implement process improvements that support faster and more predictable study start-up.

This work is creating a more efficient translational research ecosystem, enabling promising discoveries to reach patients more rapidly.



PPI Group Engagement

The Cancer Research @UCC PPI Group was established to strengthen engagement with PPI contributors and to ensure that patient and public perspectives remain at the heart of cancer research activities. The group currently comprises 19 members and played an active role in nine projects during 2025.



How do the PPI Group contribute to our research?

Members contribute in a variety of ways, including supporting funding applications, participating as volunteers and advisors, and reviewing patient-facing documents to help ensure they were clear, accessible, and relevant to their intended audiences.

"It is really rewarding to work in a Centre that values the patient voice and puts them at the heart of research. A part of my role is connecting researchers and PPI contributors, helping to ensure that patients' experiences and perspectives shape and strengthen cancer research."



- Dr. Sasna Saji Thomas, Clinical Operations Coordinator



Patient & Public Involvement

20

Projects
Supported



PPI Member
Embedded in
Governance

14

Grants
Reviewed



Panel
Representation
at Conference

PPI Awards & Recognition

- Irish Cancer Society PPI of the Year Award 2023
Mrs Sonya Lynch
- Sonya Lynch PPI Award 2024
Dr Emer Lynch
- Irish Cancer Society Public and Patient Partnership Award
LIAM Mc Trial, Prof Jack Gleeson and Dr Brendan Noonan

Trialacha Clinicúla
Clinical Trials

Trials Operations Excellence Programme

The Trials Operations Excellence Programme strengthens the systems, processes, and infrastructure that underpin high quality cancer clinical trials across the Cancer Research @UCC network.

Its purpose is to enable investigators and clinical teams to deliver trials efficiently, safely, and to the highest regulatory and ethical standards while expanding patient access to innovative therapies across the region.

Programme Leads Prof Richard Bambury, Prof Anna Olsson-Brown, Ms Mary Claire O'Regan

Quality in Cancer Trials



SAFETY

Protecting participants at every stage



ETHICS

Conducted with integrity, respect and transparency



EXCELLENCE

Adhering to the highest scientific and clinical standards



RIGOUR

Robust design, careful monitoring and reliable data



PATIENT-CENTRED

Putting patients at the heart of every decision



IMPACT

Generating meaningful results that improve lives

“As Clinical Lead for Cancer Trials Cork I am passionate about transforming how we are attracting and delivering clinical trials.
Our goal is for at least 10% of our patients to be recruited to clinical trials over the next five years.”

- Prof Richard Bambury, Clinical Lead, UCC CTG, CUH/CUH Cancer Centre





"I am honoured to join Cancer Trials Cork at such an important time in its development. It is a privilege to contribute to work that has such a meaningful impact on patients and their families"

Leading the Next Chapter for Cancer Trials Cork

Cancer Trials Cork has welcomed **Ms Mary Claire O'Regan** as its new Director of Cancer Trials Operations, a role that supports the continued growth and development of the oncology clinical trials unit at the CUH/UCC Cancer Centre.

Mary Claire will lead the operational and strategic advancement of Cancer Trials Cork, the trials unit at CUH/UCC Cancer Centre, helping to expand access to high quality clinical trials while ensuring an excellent patient experience. She brings extensive experience from the HRB CRF-UCC, where she served as Centre Manager and Interim Director of Operations. Her leadership, clinical research expertise and strategic vision will be instrumental in guiding the next phase of Cancer Trials Cork's development.

Investing in Quality Through People and Partnerships

To strengthen its quality culture and support continued growth, Cancer Trials Cork has established a dedicated Quality Improvement Project Coordinator role. **Murtaza Gangardiwala** has been appointed to the position, bringing over four years of experience across Contract Research Organisation and clinical trial site settings, including expertise in sponsor, regulatory and internal audits.

Working with the Cancer Trials Quality team, Murtaza will lead quality improvement initiatives and support the ongoing development of the Quality Management System.



Murtaza Gangardiwala,
Quality Improvement Project
Coordinator



In parallel, Cancer Trials Cork are strengthening collaboration with the **HRB Clinical Research Facility-UCC** Quality & Regulatory team to enhance governance, share expertise and align best practice.

Together, these investments in people, partnerships and quality systems will ensure Cancer Trials Cork is well positioned to deliver high quality research, meet evolving regulatory expectations and continue providing patients with access to innovative clinical trials.

TRIALS PERFORMANCE 2025

254

Patients Recruited

30

New Trials Open

Highest Recruiting Trial

HRQOL

33 Recruited 2025 (of 50)

PI - Aisling Barry

Most Complex

V940-009

Lung Vaccine Trial

Multi Site Featured Academic Trial

IMPROVE TMZ

PI - Jack Gleeson

"Clinical trials play a vital role in bringing innovative cancer treatments to patients closer to home. By expanding trial opportunities across the Munster region, we are ensuring more patients can access cutting-edge research while helping to shape the future of cancer care."

- Ali Nouredin, Senior Clinical Trial Coordinator, UCC CTG, CUH/CUH Cancer Centre





Research Talent Development Programme

The Research Talent Development Programme strengthens the people and culture that underpin Cancer Research @UCC.

Its purpose is to attract, develop, and retain exceptional cancer research talent across all career stages - from early career researchers to senior investigators.

Programme Leads Prof Aisling Barry, Dr Emer Lynch, Ms Claire Forde

Training Talent, Transforming Cancer Care

Investing in people is central to our vision for the future. Cancer Research @UCC is committed to training the **next generation of clinician-scientists**, equipping them with the skills, mentorship and opportunities needed to lead advances in cancer research and patient care. Alongside this, we are **strengthening talent development across our entire research ecosystem**, creating tailored training and professional development opportunities for researchers at every career stage.

By investing in our research staff, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, and supporting individual career progression, we aim to build a thriving, sustainable research community capable of delivering world-class discoveries and meaningful impact for patients and society. As part of our commitment to research talent development, **Claire Forde** has been appointed to the role of Research Talent Development Officer within the Research Talent Development Programme.



"As Research Talent Development Officer, my role is to ensure our researchers have access to the training, mentorship, and opportunities they need to thrive, helping to build a strong and sustainable cancer research community for the future."

- Claire Forde, Research Talent Development Officer



L-R: Aisling Barry, Killian Nungent, Harry Harvey, Laia Raigal, Emer Lynch, Claire Forde

Developing Future Leaders in Breast Cancer Research

Dr Emer Lynch is helping to shape the future of cancer research through a strong commitment to professional development, international collaboration and innovation in breast cancer care.

Awarded Breakthrough Cancer Research Fellow in 2024, as an early career researcher, Dr Lynch has embraced a number of prestigious training opportunities designed to strengthen both her scientific expertise and research leadership skills:



The OECI Grantsmanship Course is an intensive residential training program designed specifically for junior scientists, oncologists, and researchers to master the art of securing cancer research funding.

The ENDEAVOUR Breast Cancer Program, a highly competitive three-year educational and research initiative developed by Daiichi Sankyo Europe which supports early career oncologists in advancing breast cancer care through intensive training, mentorship and international networking opportunities.

The SOLT Young programme, which fosters the development of the next generation of breast cancer researchers, through exposure to cutting-edge clinical research and collaboration with peers and mentors.

Strengthening Research Through Erasmus+ Staff Mobility

Researcher **Dr Elizabeth Considine** visited the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) through the Erasmus+ Staff Mobility programme. During her visit in Lyon, Elizabeth collaborated on developing a research project using EPIC cohort data to identify diagnostic biomarkers for pancreatic, liver, and colorectal cancers, supporting advances in early detection.



Communications & Outreach Officer **Emily O'Connell** completed an Erasmus+ Staff Mobility visit to SOLT Cancer Research in Barcelona. Through job shadowing with the SOLT Communications Team, Emily gained valuable insight into how a dynamic collaborative team effectively communicates with patients, experts and stakeholders.



Clinical Operations Officer **Dr Sasna Saji Thomas** also completed an Erasmus+ Staff Mobility visit to SOLT Cancer Research in Barcelona. During the three-day visit, Sasna had the opportunity to learn about clinical research operations, patient advocacy activities, and European project coordination (Definitive project team at IDIBAPS).



EUnetCCC Exchange Programme

In October 2025, Cancer Research @UCC and CUH/UCC Cancer Centre hosted a two-day **EUnetCCC Exchange Programme** visit, showcasing the centre's integrated academic-clinical approach to cancer trials. The programme highlighted key strengths across academic, translational, and clinical research, alongside the vital contributions of multidisciplinary teams involved in trial delivery, including nursing, data management, pharmacy, and radiotherapy.

The Cancer Research @UCC and Cancer Trials Cork team members later participated in a reciprocal visit to Helsinki, providing further opportunities to exchange best practice in clinical trial operations, governance, and patient centred research within a different European setting.

Together, these visits strengthened international partnerships, supported knowledge exchange, and reinforced a shared commitment to advancing high quality, innovative cancer clinical trials across Europe.



Mary Glass, Vicky Avann, Joann Kelleher, Elaine Cronin

New PhD Student



Cancer Research @UCC is pleased to welcome **Clíodhna Nolan** as she begins her PhD research under the supervision of Dr. Kellie Dean (UCC), Dr. Derville O'Shea (CUH), and Dr. Eoghan Molloy (CUH).

Building on her MSc research and experience with the Blood Cancer Network Ireland Biobank, Clíodhna's project will investigate the use of cell-free DNA and PET/CT imaging to improve monitoring and outcome prediction for patients with high-grade non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, combining clinical research with advanced data analysis approaches.

Summer Student



Over the summer months we welcomed **Lorraine Smith**, a second-year PhD student from Trinity College Dublin to our Centre lab as part of her 8-week secondment with the All Ireland Cancer Network (AllCaN) Oesophageal, funded by Breakthrough Cancer Research.

Working under the supervision of Dr Sharon McKenna and Dr John Mackrill, Lorraine analysed cellular responses and secretions post-treatment to better understand how this innovative approach might offer a safer, more effective alternative to current treatments like radio frequency ablation.

Showcasing Research Impact

Cancer Research @UCC is organised around three overarching thematic areas that reflect our commitment to advancing cancer research and improving outcomes for patients and communities

Cancer Therapeutics

Driving innovation in prevention, diagnosis, and treatment

Cancer Microbiome

Exploring the role of the microbiome in cancer development, progression and response to therapy

Living Well

Improving quality of life, survivorship, and supportive care across the cancer journey

In addition to these themes, our centre has particular strengths and expertise in a number of specific cancer types and disease areas. Through multidisciplinary collaboration, our researchers are addressing some of the most pressing challenges across the cancer continuum, from fundamental discovery to clinical impact.

The following pages showcase a selection of research highlights from 2025, reflecting both our thematic priorities and our disease-specific expertise. We are delighted to feature some of the outstanding research taking place across the centre and to celebrate the researchers who are championing these discoveries and innovations. Together, these highlights demonstrate the breadth, excellence, and impact of Cancer Research @UCC.

If you are interested in exploring collaborative opportunities with Cancer Research @UCC email infocancerresearch@ucc.ie.



Breast Cancer Research

MINA Study

CANCER THERAPEUTICS

CANCER MICROBIOME

BREAST CANCER

STUDY PI: Roisin Connolly

Microbiome Immunotherapy Neoadjuvant Assessment (MINA): Prospective Evaluation of the Breast Microbiome and Tumor Microenvironment-related Biomarkers of Response to Neoadjuvant Systemic Therapy in Triple Negative Breast Cancer.



Dr Emilene Da Silva Morais
Postdoc working on MINA

This research is a joint effort between **Professor Mark Tangney** and **Professor Roisin Connolly**, funded by **Breast Cancer Research Foundation (BCRF)**. The project focuses on investigating the intra-tumour and stool microbiome of patients with **Triple Negative Breast Cancer (TNBC)**. The main aim of the study is to evaluate the change in breast cancer microbiome composition pre-and post-neoadjuvant therapy in patients with early stage TNBC undergoing neoadjuvant systemic therapy.

This study aims to characterise and evaluate the bacterial population shown to be present in the immediate environment of breast tumours. Previous work has shown that these bacteria can alter the effectiveness of some commonly used anti-cancer drugs, and so it is hoped that data from this study can support the development of new biomarkers that can measure how well some patients might respond to chemotherapy and /or immunotherapy compared to others; enabling a precision oncology approach to treatment decision-making.

MELODY Trial

CANCER THERAPEUTICS

CANCER MICROBIOME

BREAST CANCER

STUDY PI: Roisin Connolly

Despite its growing international use, liquid biopsy is not yet routinely available for patients with Metastatic Breast Cancer (MBC) in Ireland within the public system. In addition, there is currently no comprehensive characterisation of the mutational landscape of metastatic breast cancer in the Irish population. Our **MELODY trial**, partially funded by **BCRF**, aims to address these gaps by introducing a liquid biopsy platform for people living with metastatic breast cancer in the Cork region, generating critical data to inform personalised treatment decisions, improve patient outcomes, and support more effective service planning. **Dr Emer Lynch**, our 2024 **Breakthrough Cancer Research** Clinical Fellow leading the study under the guidance of Professor Roisin Connolly and in collaboration with UCC Pathology and industry partners.



Emer Lynch
Co-PI on MELODY Trial

MELODY will generate further data on patients living with MBC and their needs in order to improve outcomes and allow effective service planning and development. We believe that this project will provide a basis for additional research studies and a rationale for more dedicated clinical supports for patients; ensuring we can provide the best support and patient experience at such a difficult time for those living with MBC.

Public and Patient Involvement is central throughout all phases of the project, during development, implementation, evaluation, and publication - ensuring that the real-world needs of those living with metastatic breast cancer remain at the heart of the research.

Brain Cancer Research

Improve TMZ Opened In Two Sites

CANCER THERAPEUTICS

CANCER MICROBIOME



BRAIN CANCER

STUDY PI: Jack Gleeson

The Improve TMZ study looks at why different patients respond differently to the chemotherapy drug temozolomide (TMZ) and why some people experience more severe side effects than others.

This investigator-led trial headed by Principal Investigator Professor Jack Gleeson, examines the causes of blood-related side effects, such as low platelets (thrombocytopenia), which can increase bleeding or bruising and low white blood cells (leukopenia), which can increase infection risk.

By understanding what causes these problems, the team hopes to improve treatment plans and make TMZ safer and more effective for patients.

This study is a collaboration with School of Pharmacy and APC Microbiome Ireland and is open at two sites - CUH/UCC Cancer Centre and University Hospital Waterford.

Brain Tumour Researcher Networking Event

Twice per year **Professor Jack Gleeson** co-ordinates a Brain Tumour Research Regional Networking Event which brings together senior researchers from UCC & clinicians from CUH on UCC Campus to explore future potential collaborative brain tumour research in a step toward creating targeted therapies for brain tumours. Discussions have included Gut Microbiome Analysis & Diet, Radiation Oncology, Neuro Radiology and Neurosurgery.

Jack Gleeson is Professor of Medical Oncology funded by UPMC in collaboration with the National Cancer Control Programme. This event was enabled with initial funding received from a Irish Cancer Society Networking award.



Advancing Microbiome Driven Cancer Mapping

CANCER MICROBIOME

STUDY PI: Mark Tangney

Professor Mark Tangney is leading UCC's contribution to Precision Oncology Ireland Phase 2 (POI-2), a landmark €28 million national cancer research programme led by Professor Walter Kolch of University College Dublin.

Through the OncoBioMaps Ireland work package, Professor Tangney will spearhead the development of a national platform to identify and map the cancer microbiome across Ireland.



L-R: Antonia Virovska, Mark Tangney, Deirdre Stuart, Secretary of Cork University Foundation, Roisin Connolly. Image credit: UCCTV

By using the microbiome as a shared biomarker, the project aims to create detailed biological maps of cancer patients, accelerating the development of personalised cancer diagnostics and treatments while strengthening Ireland's position as a leader in microbiome-enabled precision oncology research.

"This funding will enable us to develop a standardised national platform to collect and analyse multiple sample types from cancer patients across Ireland. With Cancer Research @UCC at its centre, this uniquely positions Ireland in having multiple laboratories studying the same patients in different ways, to develop 'biological maps' of patients" - Mark Tangney, Principal Investigator POI2

This project is supported through equal funding from Research Ireland and co-investment partners. The required co-investment is being led by **Cork University Foundation**, which has successfully engaged a number of philanthropic supporters, including Mark O'Sullivan and the Mercy Hospital Foundation, with additional donors contributing to the initiative.

Upper GI & Radiation Oncology

CANCER THERAPEUTICS

GI CANCER

Professor Aisling Barry was proud to support Pancreatic Cancer Ireland at Leinster House on World Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Day. The event provided an important opportunity to advocate for the establishment of a Rapid Diagnostic Clinic for pancreatic cancer and to highlight the urgent need for greater national awareness of the disease.

By engaging with policymakers and stakeholders, the initiative reinforced the importance of earlier diagnosis, faster access to care, and improved public understanding to help achieve better outcomes for patients.



Hematology

CANCER THERAPEUTICS



BLOOD CANCER

STUDY PI: Vitaliy Mykytiv

The SUCCESSOR-1 trial is an Industry Sponsored Phase 3 clinical study focusing on individuals with relapsed or refractory multiple myeloma - a type of blood cancer that has returned or not responded after treatment.



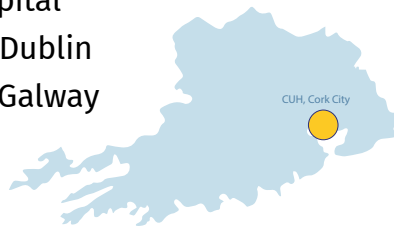
Dr Vitaliy Mykytiv

Primary Objective

The trial aims to compare the effectiveness and safety of a new drug combination: mezigdomide, bortezomib, and dexamethasone, against an existing treatment regimen of pomalidomide, bortezomib, and dexamethasone.

The trial is open at 3 Irish sites

- Cork University Hospital
- St James's Hospital Dublin
- University Hospital Galway



The SUCCESSOR-1 trial at CUH/UCC Cancer Centre recruited 8 patients out of 13 enrolled in Ireland, doubling recruitment targets and making CUH the highest-recruiting site in Ireland for this trial.

Discontinuation Study Recruiting at CUH/UCC Cancer Centre

CANCER THERAPEUTICS

LIVING WELL



BLOOD CANCER

STUDY PI: Vitaliy Mykytiv

The Discontinuation study focuses on evaluating the safety and outcomes of stopping maintenance therapy (such as lenalidomide) in multiple myeloma patients without high-risk features who have achieved sustained minimal residual disease (MRD) negativity.



Roisin O'Herlihy

Hematology Cancer Trials
Portfolio Clinical Nurse
Manager Lead, Cancer Trials
Cork, CUH/UCC Cancer Centre

This investigator-led study by **Dr Vitaliy Mykytiv**, sponsored by UCC, aims to address an important question in the treatment of multiple myeloma, where many patients remain on maintenance therapy indefinitely. Dr Mykytiv observed that patients who reduced or discontinued maintenance treatment often experienced significant improvements in their quality of life, with fewer treatment-related side effects.

By evaluating whether treatment discontinuation can be safely achieved in patients with sustained MRD negativity, the study has the potential to improve the standard of care and reduce the burden of long-term therapy without compromised treatment outcomes. To date, 68 patients have been enrolled, with recruitment ongoing towards a target of 70 participants.

From Research to Impact: Outputs & Knowledge Exchange

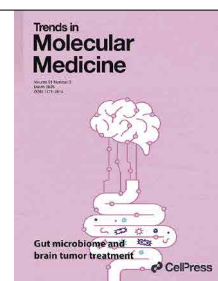
Spotlight Publications 2025



Exploiting the gut microbiome for brain tumour treatment

Trends in Molecular Medicine

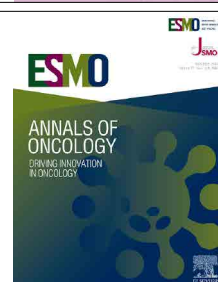
Jack Gleeson



The efficacy and safety of mirvetuximab soravtansine in FRA-positive, third-line and later, recurrent platinum-sensitive ovarian cancer: the single-arm phase II PICCOLO trial

ESMO Annals of Oncology

Conleth Murphy



Study protocol: LIAM Mc trial (Linking In with Advice and Supports for Men impacted by Metastatic cancer)

PLOS One

LIAM Mc Team



Patient and public involvement in randomised controlled trial design and implementation: a process evaluation of the linking you to support and advice (LYSA) trial

Research Involvement and Engagement

Katarina Medved



Advancing equitable access to innovation in breast cancer

NPJ Breast Cancer

Seamus O Reilly



Operational determinants of recruitment and biospecimen collection in translational observational studies: a multi-site comparative analysis

Journal of Translational Medicine

Ciarán Devoy



Full list publications 2025

60
Publications

48%
In Top 10%
Journals

20%
In Top 10%
Citations

40
International
Collaborations

2.15
FWCI

1. Cyclic peptide structure prediction and design using AlphaFold2

Authors: Rettie, S.A. | Campbell, K.V. | Bera, A.K. | Kang, A. | Kozlov, S. | **Bueso, Y.F.** | De La Cruz, J. | Ahlrichs, M. | Cheng, S. | Gerben, S.R. | Lamb, M. | Murray, A. | Adebomi, V. | Zhou, G. | DiMaio, F. | Ovchinnikov, S. | Bhardwaj, G.

Journal: Nature Communications DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-025-59940-7>

2. Accurate de novo design of high-affinity protein-binding macrocycles using deep learning

Authors: Rettie, S.A. | Juergens, D. | Adebomi, V. | **Bueso, Y.F.** | Zhao, Q. | Leveille, A.N. | Liu, A. | Bera, A.K. | Wilms, J.A. | Üffing, A. | Kang, A. | Brackenbrough, E. | Lamb, M. | Gerben, S.R. | Murray, A. | Levine, P.M. | Schneider, M. | Vasireddy, V. | Ovchinnikov, S. | Weiergräber, O.H. | Willbold, D. | Kritzer, J.A. | Mougous, J.D. | Baker, D. | DiMaio, F. | Bhardwaj, G.

Journal: Nature Chemical Biology DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41589-025-01929-w>

3. The efficacy and safety of mirvetuximab soravtansine in FRα-positive, third-line and later, recurrent platinum-sensitive ovarian cancer: the single-arm phase II PICCOLO trial

Authors: Alvarez Secord, A. | Lewin, S.N. | **Murphy, C.G.** | Cecere, S.C. | Barquín, A. | Gálvez-Montosa, F. | Mathews, C.A. | Konecny, G.E. | Ray-Coquard, I. | Oaknin, A. | Rubio Pérez, M.J. | Bonaventura, A. | Diver, E.J. | Ayuk, S.-M. | Wang, Y. | Corr, B.R. | Salutari, V.

Journal: Annals of Oncology DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annonc.2024.11.011>

4. Regional and institutional trends in assessment for academic promotion

Authors: Lim, B.H. | D'Ippoliti, C. | Dominik, M. | Hernández-Mondragón, A.C. | Vermeir, K. | Chong, K.K. | Hussein, H. | Morales-Salgado, V.S. | Cloete, K.J. | Kimengsi, J.N. | Balboa, L. | Mondello, S. | dela Cruz, T.E. | Lopez-Verges, S. | Sidi Zakari, I. | Simonyan, A. | Palomo, I. | Režek Jambrak, A. | Germo Nzweundji, J. | Molnar, A. | Saktiawati, A.M.I. | Elagroudy, S. | Kumar, P. | Enany, S. | Narita, V. | Backes, M. | Siciliano, V. | Egamberdieva, D. | **Flores Bueso, Y.**

Journal: Nature DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-024-08422-9>

5. Exploiting the gut microbiome for brain tumour treatment

Authors: Keane, L. | Cryan, J.F. | **Gleeson, J.P.**

Journal: Trends in Molecular Medicine DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.molmed.2024.08.008>

6. The Role of Stereotactic Body Radiotherapy in Oligoprogressive Malignant Disease (RADIANT): Oncologic Outcomes From a Phase 2 Nonrandomized Controlled Trial

Authors: Glicksman, R.M. | Raman, S. | Ye, X.Y. | Bedard, P.L. | Bratman, S. | Chen, E. | Chung, P. | Dawson, L.A. | Hope, A. | Hosni, A. | Javor, J. | Lindsay, P. | O'Brien, C. | Wong, R. | **Barry, A.** | Helou, J.

Journal: International Journal of Radiation Oncology Biology Physics
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijrobp.2024.09.002>

7. Bacterial exopolysaccharides and live biotherapeutics: Orchestrating immune modulation and therapeutic potential in the gut microbiome era

Authors: **Shukla, A.** | Tangney, M.

Journal: Biomedicine and Pharmacotherapy DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biopha.2025.118510>

8. SBRT for bridging and downstaging HCC before transplant

Authors: Li, Z. | Yan, M. | Claasen, M.P.A.W. | Rajendran, L. | Magyar, C.T.J. | Saha, S. | Lee, C. | Selzner, N. | Jaeckel, E. | Ghanekar, A. | Cattral, M. | Sayed, B.A. | Selzner, M. | McGilvray, I. | Shwaartz, C. | Reichman, T. | O'Kane, G.M. | Vogel, A. | Grant, R.C. | Kim, T.K. | Naidoo, C.S.-Y. | Hosni, A. | Wong, R. | Mesci, A. | Lukovic, J. | **Barry, A.** | Kim, J. | Dawson, L.A. | Sapisochin, G.

Journal: JHEP Reports DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhepr.2025.101451>

9. The Dublin International Society of Urological Pathology (ISUP) Consensus Conference on Best Practice Recommendations on the Pathology of Urachal Neoplasms

Authors: Reis, H. | Al-Ahmadie, H. | Gaisa, N.T. | Lopez-Beltran, A. | Maclean, F. | Tsuzuki, T. | Werneck Da Cunha, I. | Amin, M.B. | Aning, J. | Aron, M. | Athanazio, D. | **Bambury, R.M.** | Cheng, L. | Gopalan, A. | Gulmann, C. | Guo, C.C. | Harris, C. | Iyer, G. | Jimenez, R.E. | Jinzaki, M. | Kikuchi, E. | Lal, P. | Miyai, K. | Netto, G.J. | Pan, C.-C. | Panebianco, V. | Van Rhijn, B.W.G. | Siefker-Radtke, A. | et al

Journal: American Journal of Surgical Pathology DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1097/PAS.0000000000002416>

- 10. Advancing equitable access to innovation in breast cancer**
 Authors: O'Reilly, S. | Luis, I.V. | Adam, V. | Razis, E.D. | Urruticoechea, A. | Arahmani, A. | Carrasco, E. | Chua, B.H. | Bliss, J. | Straehle, C. | Goulioti, T. | Lindholm, B. | Werustsky, G. | Brain, E. | Bedard, P.L. | Curigliano, G. | Loi, S. | Saji, S. | Cameron, D.
 Journal: npj Breast Cancer DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41523-025-00768-1>
- 11. Bacterial-Mediated In Situ Engineering of Tumour-Associated Macrophages for Cancer Immunotherapy** Authors: Kuhl, G.C. | Tangney, M.
 Journal: Cancers DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/cancers17050723>
- 12. Why We Should, and How We Can, Reduce the Climate Toxicity of Cancer Care**
 Authors: Lynch, E. | Bredin, P. | Weadick, C.S. | Dorney, N. | Van Leeuwen, R.W.F. | O'Reilly, S.
 Journal: JCO Oncology Practice DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1200/OP-24-00680>
- 13. The Dublin International Society of Urological Pathology (ISUP) Consensus Conference on Best Practice Recommendations on the Pathology of Glandular Lesions of the Urinary Bladder**
 Authors: Paner, G.P. | Al-Ahmadie, H. | Gaisa, N.T. | Lopez-Beltran, A. | Maclean, F. | Tsuzuki, T. | Werneck Da Cunha, I. | Amin, M.B. | Aning, J. | Aron, M. | Athanazio, D. | Bambury, R.M. | Cheng, L. | Gopalan, A. | Gulmann, C. | Guo, C.C. | Harris, C. | Iyer, G. | Jimenez, R.E. | Jinzaki, M. | Kikuchi, E. | Lal, P. | Miyai, K. | Netto, G.J. | Pan, C.-C. | Panebianco, V. | Van Rhijn, B.W.G. | et al
 Journal: Advances in Anatomic Pathology DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1097/PAP.0000000000000510>
- 14. A patient-led survey on information and communication needs of patients with metastatic breast cancer in Ireland and Northern Ireland (CTRIAL-IE 23-05)**
 Authors: Gaynor, S. | O'Meara, Y. | Mulvaney, E. | Keogh, R.J. | Weadick, C.S. | Duane, F.J. | Mc Brien, A. | Greally, H. | O'Leary, M.J. | Teiserskyte, I. | Beristain, I. | Marron, J. | Mulroe, E. | Donachie, V. | Mc Loughlin, S. | O'Reilly, S.
 Journal: Breast DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.breast.2024.103837>
- 15. Structure-activity relationship of modified amphiphilic cationic cyclodextrins for enhanced siRNA delivery**
 Authors: Kont, A. | Mendonça, M.C.P. | Malanga, M. | Felegyi, K. | Lindsay, A. | Cronin, M.F. | Cahill, M.R. | O'Driscoll, C.M.
 Journal: International Journal of Pharmaceutics DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijpharm.2024.125107>
- 16. Climate change impacts and sustainability integration among breast international group members**
 Authors: O'Reilly, S. | Griffiths, J. | Fox, L. | Weadick, C.S. | My Oo, N. | Murphy, L. | O'Leary, R. | Goulioti, T. | Adam, V. | Razis, E.D. | Lindholm, B. | Werustsky, G. | Cameron, D. | Bliss, J.
 Journal: Breast DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.breast.2025.104469>
- 17. Irish national real-world analysis of the clinical and economic impact of 21-gene oncotype DX® testing in early-stage, 1-3 lymph node-positive, oestrogen receptor-positive, HER2-negative, breast cancer**
 Authors: Browne, I.M. | McLaughlin, R.A. | Weadick, C.S. | O'Sullivan, S. | McSorley, L.M. | Hadi, D.K. | Millen, S.J. | Higgins, M.J. | Crown, J.P. | Prichard, R.S. | McCartan, D.P. | Hill, A.D.K. | Connolly, R.M. | Noonan, S.A. | O'Mahony, D. | Murray, C. | O'Hanlon-Brown, C. | Hennessy, B.T. | Quinn, C.M. | Kelly, C.M. | O'Reilly, S. | Morris, P.G. | Walshe, J.M.
 Journal: Breast Cancer Research and Treatment DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10549-024-07486-5>
- 18. Charting cancer's course: revealing the role of diet, exercise, and the microbiome in cancer evolution and immunotherapy response**
 Authors: Martin-Quesada, A.I. | Hennessy, M.A. | Gutiérrez, A.C.
 Journal: Clinical and Translational Oncology DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12094-024-03595-1>
- 19. Exploring the prognostic and predictive potential of bacterial biomarkers in non-gastrointestinal solid tumors**
 Authors: Burke, C. | Glynn, T. | Jahangir, C. | Murphy, C. | Buckley, N. | Tangney, M. | Rahman, A. | Gallagher, W.M.
 Journal: Expert Review of Molecular Diagnostics DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14737159.2025.2465743>
- 20. The oncobiome; what, so what, now what?**
 Authors: Abbas, M. | Tangney, M.
 Journal: Microbiome Research Reports DOI: <https://doi.org/10.20517/mrr.2024.89>

- 21. The role of stereotactic body radiotherapy in oligoprogressive prostate cancer: A site-specific analysis of the prospective, phase II RADIANT trial**
 Authors: Ruicci, K.M. | Barry, A. | Ye, X.Y. | Chung, P.W. | Berlin, A. | Catton, C. | Gutierrez, E. | Mesci, A. | McPartlin, A. | Raman, S. | Winter, J. | Dang, J. | Fallah-Rad, N. | Kumar, V. | Jiang, D.M. | Sridhar, S. | Helou, J. | Glicksman, R.M.
 Journal: Radiotherapy and Oncology DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.radonc.2025.111041>
- 22. Oncology's ongoing struggle with evaluating quality of life limiting, treatment-related toxicity**
 Authors: O'Reilly, S. | Gaynor, S. | Mayer, E.L.
 Journal: Supportive Care in Cancer DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00520-025-10017-7>
- 23. Oncology professionals' perceptions and recommendations to improve well-being and health at work in times of crisis: qualitative thematic analysis from the ESMO Resilience Task Force survey series**
 Authors: Hardy, C. | Thorne, E. | O'Connor, M. | Élez, E. | Kamposioras, K. | Punie, K. | Oing, C. | Murali, K. | Haanen, J.B.A.G. | Lim, K.H.J. | Banerjee, S.
 Journal: ESMO Open DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esmoop.2025.104298>
- 24. Consensus on drivers of maintenance treatment choice and patterns of care in advanced ovarian cancer**
 Authors: Perez-Fidalgo, A. | Schmalfeldt, B. | George, A. | Gourley, C. | Pignata, S. | Lorusso, D. | Barretina-Ginesta, M.P. | Romero, I. | Grimm, C. | Van Gorp, T. | Rossing, M. | Collins, D.C. | Fernebro, J. | Bjørge, L. | Leary, A. | Rouge, T.D.L.M. | Harter, P. | Kurzeder, C. | Savva-Bordalo, J. | You, B.
 Journal: International Journal of Gynecological Cancer DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1136/ijgc-2024-005497>
- 25. Steroid-Induced Mental Disorders in Oncology Patients: A 10-Year Retrospective Case Series Review**
 Authors: Seymour, N. | Ismail, M.F. | Doherty, K. | Bowler, A. | Bambury, R. | Iqbal, S. | Cassidy, E.M.
 Journal: Psycho-Oncology DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/pon.70137>
- 26. The impact of cyclodextrin architecture and charge for optimized nucleic acid delivery: A comparison of monomers, dimers, and polymers**
 Authors: Kont, A. | Mendonça, M.C.P. | Malanga, M. | Felegyi, K. | Lindsay, A.J. | Cronin, M.F. | Cahill, M.R. | O'Driscoll, C.M.
 Journal: European Journal of Pharmaceutical Sciences DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejps.2025.107316>
- 27. Evolving incidence patterns for locally advanced operable breast cancer by receptor status: SEER 2010–2021**
 Authors: Thomas, A. | Rhoads, A. | Mayer, E.L. | O'Reilly, S. | Harbeck, N. | Curigliano, G. | Zhou, Y. | Adam, V. | Chan, N. | Conway, K.M. | Ignatiadis, M. | Kalinsky, K. | DeMichele, A. | Romitti, P.A.
 Journal: npj Breast Cancer DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41523-025-00835-7>
- 28. Climate change and cancer care: impacts and implications for patients and healthcare professionals**
 Authors: Flynn, C.R. | de Guzman, R. | Ayodele, O. | Schiller, J.H. | Lichter, K. | Shelley Hwang, E. | Fox, L. | Gosling, G. | Hopkins, C. | Rogan, K. | Cazap, E. | O'Reilly, S.
 Journal: ecancermedicalscience DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3332/ecancer.2025.1973>
- 29. Metabolic imaging of tumor tissue samples using planar fluorescence lifetime-based pH sensors and a SPAD array imager**
 Authors: Angelone, D. | Li, L. | Devoy, C. | Matheson, A.B. | Erdogan, A.T. | Henderson, R.K. | Tangney, M. | Papkovsky, D.B. | Andersson-Engels, S. | Konugolu Venkata Sekar, S.
 Journal: Sensors and Actuators B: Chemical DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.snb.2025.137441>
- 30. Implementation of an ISO 15189 accredited next generation sequencing service for cell-free total nucleic acid (cfTNA) analysis to facilitate driver mutation reporting in blood: The experience of a clinical diagnostic laboratory**
 Authors: Werner, R. | Crosbie, R. | Dorney, M. | Connolly, A. | Collins, D. | Hand, C.K. | Burke, L.
 Journal: Journal of Clinical Pathology DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1136/jcp-2024-209514>
- 31. A composite 18F-FDG PET/CT and HER2 tissue-based biomarker to predict response to neoadjuvant pertuzumab and trastuzumab in HER2-positive breast cancer (TBCRC026)**
 Authors: Hennessy, M.A. | Cimino-Mathews, A. | Carter, J.M. | Kachergus, J.M. | Ma, Y. | Leal, J.P.

Solnes, L.B. | Abramson, V.G. | Carey, L.A. | Rimawi, M. | Specht, J. | Storniolo, A.M. | Vaklavas, C. | Krop, I. | Winer, E. | Denbow, R. | Valero, V. | Wolff, A.C. | Wahl, R.L. | Huang, C.-Y. | Stearns, V. | Thompson, E.A. | **Connolly, R.M.**

Journal: Breast DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.breast.2025.104432>

32. An assessment of the oral health status and dental care treatment needs of oncology patients receiving bone modifying agents

Authors: Byrne, H. | Riordáin, R.N. | Cronin, M. | **O'Reilly, S.**

Journal: Oral Surgery, Oral Medicine, Oral Pathology and Oral Radiology

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.oooo.2024.11.091>

33. Multiplex Spatial Proteomic Analysis of HER2-Positive Breast Tumors Reveals Unique Molecular and Immunologic Features Associated With Treatment Response

Authors: Hennessy, M.A. | Cimino-Mathews, A. | Carter, J.M. | Kachergus, J.M. | Ma, Y. | Leal, J.P. | Solnes, L.B. | Denbow, R. | Abramson, V.G. | Carey, L.A. | Rimawi, M. | Specht, J. | Storniolo, A.M. | Valero, V. | Vaklavas, C. | Winer, E.P. | Krop, I.E. | Wolff, A.C. | Wahl, R.L. | Perez, E.A. | Huang, C.-Y. | Stearns, V. | Thompson, E.A. | **Connolly, R.M.**

Journal: JCO Precision Oncology DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1200/PO-24-00546>

34. Tepotinib Plus an EGFR Tyrosine Kinase Inhibitor in Patients With EGFR-Mutant MET-Altered NSCLC: A Case Series

Authors: Le, X. | Eisert, A. | Hsia, T.-C. | Raut, N.V. | Ahmad, A. | Chan, O.S.H. | De Bondt, C. | Farrugia, D. | Froesch, P. | González-Cao, M. | Hendriks, L. | Hochmair, M.J. | Mazieres, J. | **O'Sullivan, H.** | Popat, S. | Samol, J. | van der Wekken, A.J. | Yang, T.-Y. | Tho, L.M. | Himpe, U. | Lam, W.-S. | Lee, K.W.C. | Petrini, I. | Berghoff, K. | Karachaliou, N. | Joshi, K. | Vlassak, S. | Chang, G.-C.

Journal: Clinical Lung Cancer DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clcc.2025.02.013>

35. The use of precision radiotherapy for the management of cancer-related pain in the abdomen

Authors: Glynn, A.M. | Lawrence, Y.R. | Dawson, L.A. | **Barry, A.S.**

Journal: Current Opinion in Supportive and Palliative Care

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1097/SPC.0000000000000738>

36. "What women want": Focus group discussions to inform the design of nutrition resources for women impacted by menopause following cancer treatment

Authors: Cushen, S.J. | Murphy, M. | **Johnston, K.E.**

Journal: Clinical Nutrition Open Science DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nutos.2024.12.006>

37. A core outcome set for locoregional treatment reporting in neoadjuvant systemic breast cancer treatment trials

Authors: Potter, S. | Avery, K. | Ahmed, R. | de Boniface, J. | Chatterjee, S. | Dodwell, D. | Dubsky, P. | | **O'Reilly, S.** | O'Neill, C. | Nikopoulou, A. | Nikolic, D. | Nguyen, T. | Narui, K. | Sánchez, M.A.N. | Namiq, K. | Murawa, D. | Munzone, E. | Migueláñez, T.M. | Morgan, J. | Montero, A. | Misra, S. | , I. | Daiuto, M. | Cutress, R. | et al

Journal: npj Breast Cancer DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41523-025-00824-w>

38. Tumour-Specific Growth Rate as a Potential Predictor of Outcomes in Oligoprogressive Disease Treated With Stereotactic Body Radiotherapy

Authors: Navarro-Domenech, I. | Helou, J. | Kuruvilla Thomas, S. | Dawson, L.A. | Hosni, A. | Raman, S. | Chung, P. | Wong, R. | Glicksman, R. | Lindsay, P. | Javor, J. | Weiss, J. | Hope, A.J. | **Barry, A.S.**

Journal: Clinical Oncology DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clon.2025.103895>

39. Dying, death and doctors-in-training: survey

Authors: Moloney, C. | Nuzum, D. | Lyons, M. | Steele, C. | Forrest, C. | **Lynch, E.** | Elhassan, E. | **O'Sullivan, H.** | O'Leary, M.J. | **O'Reilly, S.**

Journal: BMJ Supportive and Palliative Care DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1136/spcare-2025-005631>

40. Further Optimizing Care of Patients With Operable Hormone Receptor-Sensitive Breast Cancer

Authors: Thomas, A. | Mayer, E.L. | Demichele, A. | Harbeck, N. | Curigliano, G. | Ignatiadis, M. | Adam, V. | Zhou, Y. | Brown, T.P. | Gilham, L. | Chua, B.H. | Kalinsky, K. | Wolff, A.C. | **O'Reilly, S.**

Journal: Journal of Clinical Oncology DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1200/JCO.24.01080>

41. The effectiveness of an educational intervention on adolescents' understanding of radiation therapy

Authors: Murphy, K. | **O'Donovan, T.** | Devine, A. | **Barry, A.** | England, A. | McEntee, M.

Journal: Radiography DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.radi.2025.103171>

- 42. Awareness of modifiable lifestyle risk factors and acceptability of secondary risk reduction services amongst Irish breast cancer survivors and oncology healthcare professionals**
 Authors: Steele, C.| Harrington, J.M.| O'Reilly, S.
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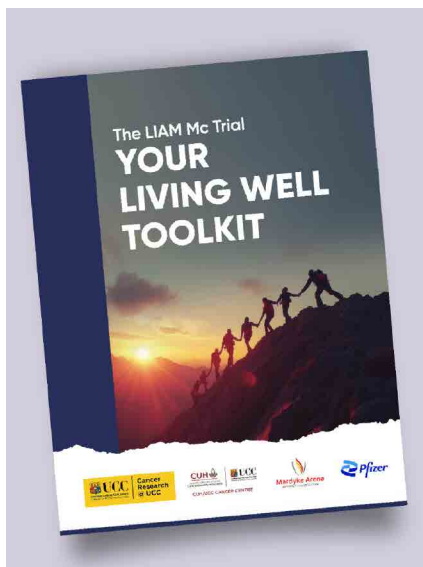
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Research Outputs and Knowledge

In addition to peer-reviewed scientific publications, Cancer Research @UCC researchers contributed to a range of outputs designed to inform patients, the public, healthcare professionals, policymakers, and other stakeholders.

Public and Patient Resources

LIAM Mc Your Living Well Toolkit



Developed by the LIAM Mc team at UCC and CUH/UCC Cancer Centre along with past trial participants, in collaboration with Irish Cancer Society and Pfizer, this resource was designed for men who have completed the 12-week physiotherapy-led LIAM Mc programme which had **Professor Jack Gleeson** as PI.

The toolkit provides essential guidance for life beyond the programme, helping men living with metastatic cancer sustain and build upon their progress. It covers key areas like physical activity, nutrition, emotional resilience, sleep, and managing treatment side effects.

The LIAM Mc Trial (Linking In with Advice and supports for Men with Metastatic Cancer) was a 12-week programme aimed to meet the health and wellbeing needs on a holistic basis of men living with metastatic cancer, beyond standard treatment.

Menopause, Diet & Cancer

The Menopause, Diet & Cancer booklet is an evidence-based resource developed by CORU-registered dietitians **Dr Katie Johnston** of Cancer Research @UCC and **Dr Samantha Cushen** from the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences, in partnership with the Irish Cancer Society.

The book emerged from our Women's Health Initiative "Linking You with Support and Advice" (LYSA) Trial and contains practical resources for women navigating menopause as a result of cancer treatment. By offering evidence-based nutritional guidance to support health and well-being it provides actionable dietary strategies to alleviate treatment-induced menopausal symptoms.



Dr Katie Johnston and Dr Samantha Cushen



Menopause, Diet and Cancer by the Irish Cancer Society was a five-part webinar series turned podcast hosted by **Dr Katie Johnston** and **Dr Samantha Cushen** that focuses on evidence-based nutrition and lifestyle strategies to manage treatment-induced menopausal symptoms.

Policy and Practice Influencing Outputs

Patient and Public Involvement Policy Brief



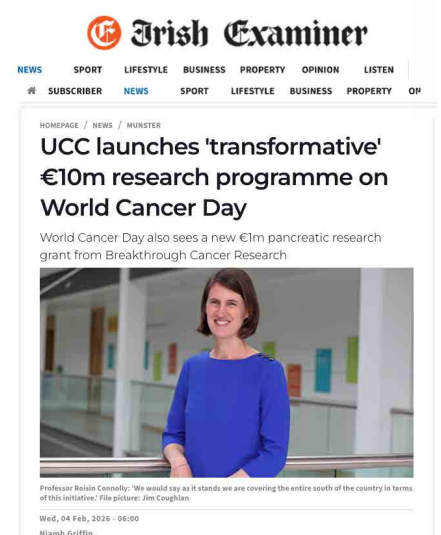
The **Strengthening Equity and Inclusion in Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) Contributors – Policy Brief (2026)** was developed through collaboration with Irish Cancer Society PPI contributors and identifies barriers to meaningful public involvement in research and provides practical recommendations to support more equitable, inclusive, and impactful PPI practices across the research ecosystem.

This policy brief presents the findings from a co-design workshop conducted by our Cancer Research @UCC PhD candidate **Katarina Medved** with Irish Cancer Society PPI contributors, aimed at developing a cross-sectional survey to explore the demographic characteristics, engagement, and retention of PPI contributors.



Katarina Medved
PhD candidate

Media Mentions





The Future of Cancer Research

On World Cancer Day 2026, Cancer Research @ UCC hosted **The Future of Cancer Research**, a landmark conference featuring national and international experts, alongside leaders from healthcare, academia, industry and government. The event marked the announcement of a transformative **€10 million investment in cancer research** and care, aimed at connecting cutting-edge discoveries with patient treatment across the south of Ireland.

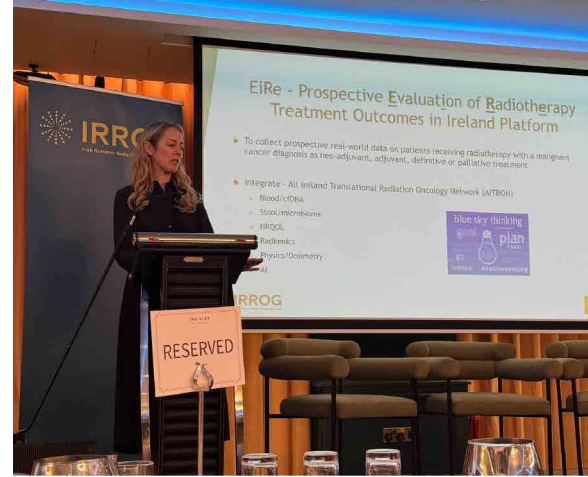
Led by UCC in partnership with the HSE South West and healthcare partners, the initiative will expand access to innovative clinical trials, advance research in key areas including cancer therapeutics and survivorship, and strengthen the region's position as a leader in cancer research and healthcare innovation.



Irish Research Radiation Oncology Group (IRROG) Conference 2025

On 28 November 2025, members of Cancer Research @UCC attended the IRROG Conference at The Alex Hotel, Dublin. The conference brought together more than 120 clinicians, radiation therapists, medical physicists, nurses, researchers, funders and patient partners, joining both in person and online, alongside leading international experts in radiation oncology research.

Professor Aisling Barry, Chair of Radiation Oncology at UCC, Consultant Radiation Oncologist at CUH/UCC Cancer Centre, Principal Investigator at Cancer Research @UCC and IRROG Site Lead for Cork University Hospital, is an active member of the national network.



Professor Barry was also among the closing speakers at the 2025 conference, alongside international keynote speaker Professor Laura Dawson of the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, Toronto. Their presentations highlighted the role that well-designed clinical trials can play in translating advances in radiotherapy into changes in clinical practice and improved outcomes for patients.

Through the network, researchers nationally contribute to investigator-led studies, international clinical trials and shared research initiatives, helping to expand the availability of radiotherapy research beyond individual centres and improve opportunities for patients to participate in clinical trials closer to home. Together, these collaborative efforts are helping to build a stronger national radiotherapy research environment and improve equitable access to innovative cancer treatments for patients across Ireland.

Established in 2022, IRROG brings together Ireland's research-active radiotherapy departments with the aim of increasing access to high-quality clinical trials, strengthening national research infrastructure and supporting the development and delivery of Irish investigator-led studies. The progress presented at the conference demonstrated the impact of this national approach, with IRROG having tripled clinical trial recruitment and doubled the number of open radiotherapy trials nationally since its establishment.



National & Global Engagement

United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda

Postdoctoral Researcher **Dr Yensi Flores Bueso** has been appointed to the United Nations Independent Group of Scientists responsible for drafting the 2027 Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR).



The GSDR plays a critical role in strengthening the science–policy–society interface, providing evidence-based guidance to policymakers working to accelerate progress towards sustainable development and poverty eradication. Dr Flores Bueso brings valuable expertise, alongside a unique global perspective shaped by her experience in Honduras and Ireland.

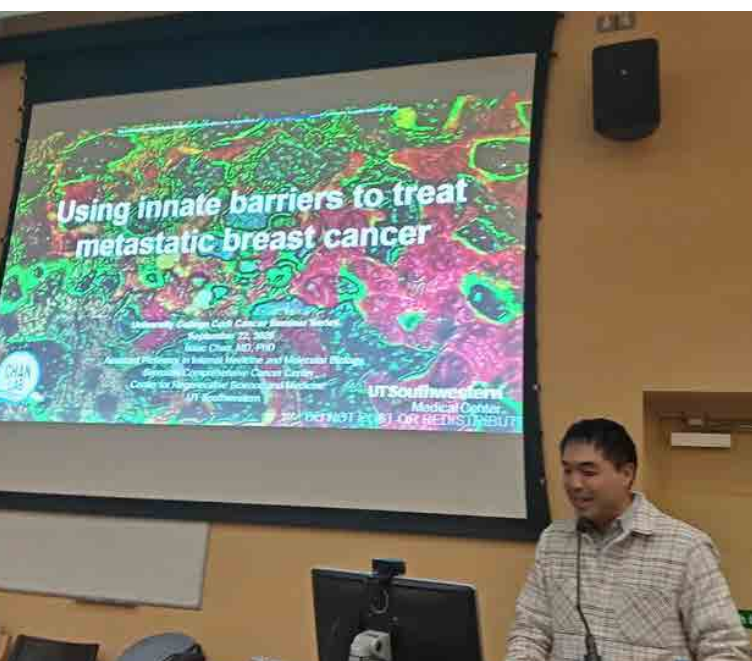
Dr Flores Bueso also serves as a member of the UN Scientific Advisory Board, reflecting her growing international leadership.

DEFINITIVE Annual Meeting

We were proud to host the Annual Meeting of the **DEFINITIVE Consortium** in UCC in January 2026, bringing together partners to review progress and align on the next phases of this important European initiative.

The DEFINITIVE Trial is a Horizon European Commission–funded clinical trial evaluating whether personalized treatment in early-stage HER2-positive breast cancer can improve quality of life without compromising outcomes or survival. The study is led in Cork by Professor Roisin Connolly, and with thanks to the support of the CRF-UCC Academic Study Co-ordinator, the DEFINITIVE study is now open and recruiting patients at both UCC Cancer Trials Group sites in Ireland: CUH/UCC Cancer Centre Cork and UHW Waterford.





Visiting Breast Cancer Expert

The **UCC Cancer Seminar Series 2025/2026** was launched with an in-person talk in CUH Auditorium from Dr Isaac Chan of UT Southwestern Medical Center, who presented his research on innovative approaches to overcoming complex biological barriers in the treatment of metastatic breast cancer.

The UCC Cancer Seminar Series is a monthly virtual lecture series established to showcase the region's significant growth in cancer care and research over the past decade, while providing a forum for knowledge exchange and discussion between clinical oncology teams, UCC cancer researchers and institutes, as well as national and international cancer experts.

UCC Cancer Seminar Series 2025/2026 Speakers

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| January 2025 | Bruce Levine, University of Pennsylvania, USA
From Innovation To Translation To Patients: The Future Of Genetically Engineered T-Cells |
| February 2025 | Josephine Hegarty, University College Cork, Ireland
Solutions For Implementation Of Survivorship Care
Gerry Lee, University College Cork, Ireland
Assessing And Reducing Treatment-related Cardiovascular Toxicity |
| March 2025 | Rory Crotty, Cork University Hospital, Ireland
An Overview Of Hematopathology In Cancer Care
Rachel Brodie, University College Cork, Ireland
Genetics Of Myelodysplastic Syndrome |
| April 2025 | Bryan Neth, Mayo Clinic, USA
Neuro-Oncology Anywhere: A Decentralized Approach To Clinical Trials And Longitudinal Neurocognitive Assessment In Patients With Brain Tumors.
Kalil Abdullah, UPMC, USA
Novel Aspects Of Brain Tumor Research, Therapy And Treatment Including Advanced Surgical Techniques |
| May 2025 | Breffni Hannon, Prince Margaret Hospital, Canada
Caregiver Interventions, Supporting Carer Around Metastatic Disease
Andy Philips, HSE, Ireland
Integrating Health And Social Care To Optimise Cancer Outcomes |
| September 2025 | Isaac Chan, UT Southwestern Medical Center, USA
Using Innate Barriers To Treat Metastatic Breast Cancer |
| October 2025 | Vince Reyes, UPMC, USA
Immuno-oncology Discontinuation Study (PD-1 Stop)
Jarushka Naidoo, Beaumont Hospital, Ireland
Immuno-oncology Toxicity |
| December 2025 | Erin Giles, Fred Hutch U Washington, USA
Bone Metastasis Trial And Prognostication |

Cancer Trials Ireland Training Day

Programme Manager **Dr Laia Raigal** spoke at the Cancer Trials Ireland National Training Day on January 30, 2026 at O'Reilly Hall, UCD.

Her presentation "Breaking down silos: building a unified research team in Cork" focused on integrating local research units, overcoming operational barriers, and fostering a unified team approach to clinical trial delivery.

**Silos
Slow
Science**



Duplicate efforts
Fragmented communication
Slow decision-making
Lost opportunities



Leadership in Cancer Trials Ireland

Professor Seamus O'Reilly is a consultant medical oncologist, clinical professor at University College Cork, and clinical lead of Cancer Trials Ireland. He has widened patient access to clinical trials across Ireland and built the collaborations and international partnerships that bring emerging therapies to people living with cancer.



In 2022 he established the National Green Cancer Clinical Trials Initiative, leading efforts to make trials more sustainable by cutting carbon emissions, adopting digital solutions, and reducing unnecessary travel across trial sites nationwide.



Professor O'Reilly is also Principal Investigator of 'Greening a Chemotherapy Day Ward', a HSE SPARK-funded project at the CUH/UCC Cancer Centre. This project aims to integrate sustainable practices into everyday oncology care, such as promoting oral over intravenous drug delivery, lifestyle prescribing and extending treatment intervals. The hope is to demonstrate that high-quality cancer treatment and environmental responsibility can go hand in hand.

Awards & Recognition

Gold Standard European Accreditation Awarded to CUH/UCC Cancer Centre

CUH/UCC Cancer Centre has achieved the highest possible European accreditation and is now a designated **Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECI) Cancer Centre**.

This prestigious accreditation recognises excellence across the full spectrum of cancer activities, including patient care, research, education and training. It marks a significant milestone in the development of the Cancer Centre, an innovative partnership between Cork University Hospital and University College Cork, with strong regional support from HSE South West.



The OECI accreditation reflects the Centre's commitment to delivering world-class cancer services while strengthening the integration of research and clinical care to improve outcomes for patients and their families.

Further enhancing the Centre's capacity to deliver on its strategic ambitions, **Dr Ariel Domlyn** has recently been appointed as Programme Manager for the CUH/UCC Cancer Centre, one of the Centre's dedicated cancer research strategic support roles.

Dr Domlyn brings extensive international expertise in implementation science, programme evaluation, healthcare quality improvement, and health services research. Prior to joining the Cancer Centre, she held senior research and leadership positions within the US Veterans Health Administration and was a fellow of the Implementation Research Institute at Washington University in St. Louis.



"Achieving OECI accreditation is a significant milestone. I look forward to supporting the Centre's strategic priorities by helping turn evidence and innovation into sustainable improvements that benefit patients, staff and the wider health system."

Dr Ariel Domlyn, Programme Manager, CUH/UCC Cancer Centre



L-R: Dr Claire O'Regan, OEI Project Manager; Claire Forde, Jean-Benoit Burrión, OEI Board Member; Prof Roisin Connolly, Academic Director CUH/UCC Cancer Centre; Simon Oberst, OEI Board Member; Jane Shanahan, Assistant Director of Nursing Cancer Centre and Prof Aisling Barry, Chair of Radiation Oncology and Education lead for CUH/UCC Cancer Centre.

Dr Domlyn's appointment will support the Centre in translating research into practice, strengthening multidisciplinary collaboration, advancing strategic initiatives, and maximising the impact of cancer research and innovation across CUH, UCC, and the wider region.

Together, the achievement of OEI accreditation and the strengthening of strategic support leadership reinforce the CUH/UCC Cancer Centre's position as a leading centre for cancer care, research, education and innovation, both nationally and internationally.

Recognition Award for Impact

Professor Roisin Connolly received a 2025 UCC Staff Recognition Award for Impact at the University College Cork Staff Recognition Awards Ceremony, celebrating the exceptional individuals who help shape and strengthen the university community.

The award recognises Professor Connolly's outstanding leadership and impact in advancing cancer research, clinical trials, and healthcare collaboration. A key achievement was her leadership in securing OEI

accreditation for the **CUH/UCC Cancer Centre**, a milestone that strengthened the partnership between University College Cork and Cork University Hospital and enhanced the region's cancer research and care infrastructure. Her work has also supported the development of the **Academic Health Science System**, helping to create a more integrated research and clinical trials ecosystem that will ultimately benefit patients and healthcare innovation. This recognition reflects the significant influence of her work across UCC, the health service, and the wider research community.



Recognition of Excellence in Survivorship Research

A collaborative team across Cancer Research @UCC, UCC's School of Nursing & Midwifery and the Clinical Research Facility-UCC were honoured with the **Irish Cancer Society Survivorship Project of the Year Award** for their Linking You to Support and Advice (LYSA) study at the Irish Cancer Society Research Awards, recognising their innovative approach to survivorship care for women recovering from cancer.

The LYSA study stood out for its focus on patient centred, nurse-led supportive care for women recovering from breast and gynaecological cancers.



L-R: Katie Johnston, Josephine Hegarty, Brendan Palmer, Kate O Connell

Supporting the UCC MRT Society Student Research Conference

As part of our commitment to student success and training, we were delighted to contribute to the **2025 MRT Medical Research and Technology Student Research Conference** through our Inaugural Prizes for Best Oral Presentation and Best Poster Presentation.

The UCC MRT society was established with the objective of fostering a community of students enthusiastic about engaging in the myriad research and technological prospects within the medical domain. They hosted their 6th annual MRT Student Research Conference in the Dora Allman Room of UCC showcasing outstanding work being done by UCC's emerging researchers.

We would like to thank Professor Seamus O'Reilly for representing Cancer Research @UCC on the day. His ongoing commitment to promoting undergraduate research and supporting the next generation of researchers reflects the values at the heart of this conference.



The award for Best Oral Presentation was made to **Aoife Corcoran** for her presentation titled: "Short and Long-term Outcome Following Intraventricular Haemorrhage Among Preterm Infants in CUMH".

Samiha Sajida and Jordan Gertenstein were awarded Best Poster Presentation for a poster titled "Cystic Fibrosis in Ireland: A Comparative Case Series Demonstrating Longitudinal Impact of Systemic and Therapeutic Advances".

Fundraising & Collaborations

Cancer Research @UCC is proud to work closely with Cork University Foundation, the vehicle for securing and stewarding philanthropic donations to University College Cork.



Cork University Foundation
Fondúireacht Ollscoile Chorcaí

Cork University Foundation plays a vital role in helping us raise funds that support groundbreaking cancer research, cutting-edge equipment, and initiatives that improve outcomes for patients and their families. Donations to Cancer Research are managed through Cork University Foundation, ensuring that every contribution is stewarded carefully and directed towards advancing cancer research and discovery.

UPMC Investment in Academic Oncology Leadership

A major philanthropic investment from UPMC has strengthened cancer research and clinical trials leadership at Cancer Research @UCC through the establishment of two oncology professorships.

Following the appointment of Professor Jack Gleeson, announced in our previous Annual Report, 2025 saw the successful recruitment of Professor **Anna Olsson-Brown to the role of UPMC Professor of Cancer Clinical Trials at Cancer Research @UCC.**

The appointment was formally announced in May 2026 and completed the recruitment of two UPMC-funded oncology professorships developed in partnership with the National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP) and HSE South West. Professor Olsson-Brown brings internationally recognised expertise in immunotherapy, translational research and cancer clinical trials, further strengthening Cancer Research @UCC's ability to accelerate research discoveries into improved treatments and outcomes for patients. This investment reflects the shared commitment of UPMC, UCC and healthcare partners to expanding research capacity, enhancing access to clinical trials and supporting excellence in cancer care across Ireland.



L-R: Dr Heath Skinner (UPMC), Eimear Keohane, Dr Richard Bambury, Prof Helen Whelton, Prof Anna Olsson-Brown, Prof Roisin Connolly, Mary Hicky (UPMC) and Prof Jack Gleeson. Image Credit: Ger McCarthy Photography



Fundraising in memory of Catherine Spillane

Clinical trial participant Catherine Spillane took part in studies with the UCC Cancer Trials Group at CUH/UCC Cancer Centre.

In appreciation of the care Catherine received, and in her memory following her passing, Catherine's family and the **Conna Valentines Fundraising Committee** organised two events over Valentine's weekend 2025, raising an outstanding €96,000 for cancer research and care.

These fundraising efforts have enabled the appointment of a Clinical Nurse Manager 2, supporting the coordination of cancer clinical trials in the region.

Our sincere thanks to the Spillane family, the Conna Valentines Fundraising Committee, and the wider Conna community for their generosity and impact.

Mallow Parish Christmas Fundraiser

A **Christmas Charity Concert** was held in aid of Cancer Research @UCC in December in St. John the Baptist Church, Burnfort, Mallow Co. Cork with performances by local talent such as Gemma Magner, Dan Twomey, St. Vincent's Choir, Lena Edmonds, Mary P O' Sullivan, John Daly and John Drew. A sincere thanks to the organisers, performers and all who attended for their generosity and support.



In-memory Gifts

Thank you to all those who give to Cancer Research, including the many who support us online and through in-memory gifts.

Interested in making a donation to Cancer Research?

Scan the QR code to learn more



The Eileen and Leslie Quick Charitable Fund: A Lasting Commitment

Among the most committed supporters of Cancer Research @UCC, the **Eileen and Leslie Quick Charitable Fund** has provided visionary philanthropic support over many years. Their enduring partnership has played a vital role in enabling research excellence, fostering innovation, and creating opportunities for researchers to pursue discoveries that can ultimately benefit patients.

The Quicks' generosity and belief in the importance of cancer research has made a lasting impact at UCC and continues to help shape the future of cancer research in Ireland.

Rosscarbery Motorcycle: Turkey Run

A huge thank you to Daithi Wright and the Rosscarbery Motorcycle Turkey Run participants, who raised an incredible €6,000 for Cancer Research by organising and hosting a motorbike run.



Moving Words

A Collaboration in Creativity and Care



We want to remind our students, staff, friends and the broader community that, just as Wordsworth's poem suggests, spending time in nature and staying connected can uplift the spirit. We hope these words inspire people to care for themselves and support Cancer Research.

Aoife Browne

Director of CO-LAB CCAE & lead creator

Cancer Research @UCC partnered with the Cork Centre for Architectural Education (CCAЕ) to create **Moving Words**, a sculptural installation developed by the CCAE CO-LAB team to raise awareness of cancer research, particularly survivorship trials supporting patient wellbeing.

Bringing together students and alumni, the project combines poetry, public health and design to encourage reflection and inspire support.

Thank you to our 2025 Funders

AstraZeneca

Bayer

Breakthrough Cancer Research

Breast Cancer Research Foundation

Health Research Board

Higher Education Authority

Horizon Europe

HSE South West

HSE SPARK

Irish Cancer Society

Pfizer

Research Ireland

UPMC

UCC College of Medicine & Health

and our Charity Partner Cork University Foundation and
donors

RESEARCH IMPACT BY NUMBERS IN 2025



30

New Trials
Opened in 2025



254

Patients
Recruited



60

Publications
in 2025



+€2m

New Secured
Research Funding



5

New Investigator-Led
Trials Activated



2.25

Field-Weighted
Citation Impact



+40

International
Collaborations



42

Principal
Investigators



48%

In Top 10%
Journals



4

Newly Hired Academic
Clinicians in 2025



4

Research
Awards



1

Policy
Brief



19

Patient and Public
Involvement Members



4

Grant Proposals with Patient
& Public Involvement



20

Projects with active Patient
and Public Involvement

What's next? Building a Sustainable Cancer Research Ecosystem

Our next ambition is to build the people, infrastructure and partnerships needed to accelerate discovery, strengthen cancer research capacity and ensure that innovation translates into meaningful and lasting benefits for patients. Possible areas for future collaboration include:

Accelerate Translational & Early-Phase Clinical Research

Strengthen translational and clinical trials infrastructure, with the ambition to establish a purpose-built Clinical Trials Insitute that attracts early-phase and precision oncology studies and expands patient access to innovative treatments.

Develop the Next Generation of Cancer Research Leaders

Expand our PhD and clinician-scientist fellowships programmes and create shared talent development programmes with industry, building the skills, expertise and collaborative experience needed to lead the future of cancer research.

Build World-Class, Disease Focused Research Capacity

Attract leading clinical scientists with protected time for research and build multidisciplinary teams around priority cancers, integrating clinical and scientific expertise to accelerate discovery, translation and meaningful patient impact.

PHOTO: The Future of Cancer Research event, organized by Cancer Research @UCC on the 4th of February 2026 for World Cancer Day. Read more about it on the Annual Report (QR code above)

Philanthropic and strategic partnerships can be powerful catalysts for cancer research, providing researchers with the opportunity to explore ambitious ideas, generate the evidence needed to unlock larger programmes, develop research talent, and accelerate promising discoveries towards meaningful patient impact.

Wish to
discuss
partnership
opportunities?

Please contact
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