Introducing
THE CARDIOLOGY AND
CARDIOTHORACIC SURGICAL CENTRE
FOR THE WEST OF IRELAND
at University Hospital Galway
Galway University Hospitals (GUH) is one of eight Major Academic Teaching Hospitals in Ireland and is made up of University Hospital Galway (UHG) and Merlin Park University Hospital (MPUH). GUH provides Secondary, Regional and Supra-regional services in respect of Cardiology and Cancer Services for the Health Services Executive West & North West and adjoining regions.

REFERRAL HOSPITALS INCLUDE:
- Sligo General Hospital
- Letterkenny General Hospital
- University Hospital Galway
- Merlin Park University Hospital
- Mayo General Hospital
- Roscommon County Hospital
- Portiuncula Hospital
- Ennis General Hospital

HEART DISEASE IN IRELAND
Diseases of the circulatory system remain the leading cause of death in Ireland accounting for 38% of all deaths in 2003 (CSO 2005). While death rates from circulatory disease are declining in Ireland, the Ischaemic Heart Disease (IHD) rates remain considerably above the EU average (15 Countries) as illustrated in figure 2 (derived from World Health Organisation ‘Health for All’ database). With a higher ageing population than any other part of the country and an increasing burden of disease, the West of Ireland has many challenges ahead.
Cardiology Department

The department was established in 1984 and by July 2007 will have 4 Consultant Cardiologists and over 80 staff.

Our mission in Cardiology is “to provide a needs-led, accessible, equitable, evidence based, quality of care for patients with cardiac conditions”

Cardiology Services

In 2005, 23,224 patients were seen at the Department of Cardiology which incorporates;

- Coronary Care Unit
  - 12 Beds with additional telemetry facilities
- Catheter Laboratories
  - 2 state of the art laboratories
- Chest Pain Clinic
  - Co-ordinated by a Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Cardiac Day Ward
  - 3 bed unit for day cases
- Cardiac Investigations Unit
  - 13 technicians are currently employed
- Cardiology Outpatient services
  - 110 sessions per year

Cardiology Investigations

A full range of in-patient and outpatient procedures are performed including:

- ECG
- Exercise Stress Test
- Holter Monitoring
- Event Monitoring
- Blood Pressure monitoring
- Echocardiography Adult / Paediatric

The echocardiography service is expanding rapidly with well over 6000 procedures carried out in 2006. The laboratory boasts state of the art equipment and with further developments in 2007 will offer the following:

- Transoesophageal Echo
- Paediatric studies
- Bubble Studies
- 3D echocardiography
- Dobutamine stress echo
- Portable services in both GUH sites
Cardiology Procedures

Angiography has become the gold standard for diagnosing heart disease and the unit has seen an 870% increase in angiography since 1997. Over 2,500 angiograms and 600 Percutaneous Coronary Interventions (PCI's) were performed in 2006. This volume is set to increase with the planned commissioning of the remaining 4 CCU beds, the second angiography lab and the expansion of current day ward facilities.

The full range of procedures offered include:

~ Diagnostic Coronary Angiography
~ Angioplasty
~ Graft Studies
~ Renal Angiography
~ Pacemaker Insertion
~ Valvuloplasty
~ Loop Recorder Insertion
~ Transoesophageal Echocardiography
~ DC Cardioversion
~ Tilt Table Testing
~ Implantable Automatic Cardiac Defibrillators
~ Biventricular Pacing

Coronary Care Unit

The Coronary Care Unit looks after:

~ ST elevation MI patients (including patients thrombolysed by the GP in rural areas who are admitted directly to the unit)
~ Patients admitted directly from the dedicated Croí Cardaic Ambulance (post thrombolysis or following rescue PCI)
~ Acute coronary syndrome patients
~ Post angioplasty patients
~ Patients with a rhythm disturbance.
Clinical Nurse Specialists

There are a number of clinical nurse specialists including:

CNS Chest Pain
The Chest Pain Clinic set up in February 2002 is targeting a population with suspected new onset of symptoms suggestive of angina. Over 600 patients a year are seen and up to 17% have angiography.

CNS Heart Failure
The Heart Failure service provides nurse-led clinics with the aim of reducing readmission to hospital and ensuring optimal treatment for patients.

CNS Cardiac Rehabilitation / Cardiac Liaison Nurse
A comprehensive Cardiac Rehabilitation Programme operates at UHG with close links to referring hospitals. The philosophy of the Cardiac Rehabilitation department is patient empowerment. Rehabilitation is commenced as soon as patients are stable. It is patient focused, easily accessed and there is no waiting list.

In Collaboration with our partners Croí, the West of Ireland Cardiology Foundation, all patients attending cardiac rehabilitation are given the opportunity to join a cardiac club in the community. The West of Ireland is one of the few areas offering a comprehensive phase 4 rehabilitation programme in the community.

Research Activity

The Research Department consists of two full-time research nurses who co-ordinate a number of research initiatives including in-house multidisciplinary research. A number of papers, posters and oral presentations are published each year by both medical and nursing staff.

There is collaboration with:
~ Local Industry,
~ Croí, the West of Ireland Cardiology Foundation
~ National University of Ireland, Galway
~ REMEDI - the Regenerative Medicine Institute

The goal of REMEDI is to develop minimally invasive new treatments for disease utilising adult stem cell and gene therapy. The main disease targets are cardiovascular disease and arthritis. REMEDI brings together university scientists, clinicians and local industry in a partnership, centred in Galway but with international collaborators. The Department of Cardiology in collaboration with REMEDI scientists are attempting to develop therapies which will result in the regeneration of heart tissue and blood vessels. The ultimate goal is to perform clinical trials in the Department of Cardiology in UHG to ensure that basic discoveries in the REMEDI programme result in improved patient care.
Cardiothoracic Surgery

In Ireland, the specialty of cardiothoracic surgery includes the operative management of diseases of all organs within the chest including the heart, lungs and the adjacent structures of diaphragm, pleura and chest wall. There is an interface with surgery of the oesophagus with General Surgery.

Philosophy and principles of our Cardiothoracic Surgical care:
- The patient always comes first - we aim to provide the best, exemplary care to our patients.
- Cardiothoracic Surgery is a team effort.
- Continuing professional development, critical review, audit and the implementation of accepted pathways of care are the cornerstones of good patient care.
- Commitment to research and development
- Collaboration with other centres of excellence within the field of Cardiothoracic Surgery.

Cardiothoracic Services

Our new state of the art facility has been completed and includes
- two state of the art digital theatres with an audio visual system,
- a 6 bedded cardiothoracic intensive care unit,
- a 4 bedded cardiothoracic HDU
- 10 beds in a cardiothoracic ward.

Services are provided by 2 Consultant Cardiothoracic Surgeons, 4 perfusionists, 3 Registrars, a full complement of junior doctors, nurses and allied health professionals. A highly experienced senior nurse manager (CNM3) coordinates operational requirements of the service.

We support already established services - especially the related fields of cardiology, respiratory medicine and oncology.

There are outpatient sessions in both UHG and MPUH to reduce the time delay from diagnosis to surgery and to reduce the amount of travelling for patients from the referral areas.

To minimise cancellation of all elective surgery, all elective patients are seen by appropriate members of the multidisciplinary team at a pre-assessment clinic within 2 weeks of their operation date.

At the pre-assessment clinic there is consultation with:
- Consultant cardiothoracic surgeons supported by the medical team
- A cardiothoracic nurse
- A Senior surgical social worker
- An Occupational therapist
- A Dietician
- A Physiotherapist
- A Pharmacist
Cardiac Surgery
A full range of all adult surgical procedures (except transplantation) are available including:
- Coronary artery bypass grafting (CABG)
- Aortic valve replacement (AVR),
- Tricuspid valve repair & replacement
- Mitral valve replacement
- Aortic surgery

Thoracic Surgery
The incidence of lung cancer in the West of Ireland is 39 per 100,000 and approximately 20% of patients are suitable for potentially curable lung cancer. The cardiothoracic unit will support the regional cancer centre through diagnostic and staging procedures and by providing potentially curative primary resectional surgery, or adjuvant surgery to those who have undergone downstaging with radiotherapy / chemotherapy thus increasing the chances of these patients for cure.

The unit also supports a Level 1 trauma service including the treatment of blunt and penetrating chest wounds. In addition, the following is available:
- Pleurectomy
- Lobectomy
- Pneumonecstasy
- Lung Volume Reduction surgery
- Mediastinoscopy,
- Thoracotomy
- Sleeve resection
- Decortication
- VATS (video assisted thoracoscopic surgery)

Advanced Nurse Practitioners
Site preparation is underway for the development of cardiothoracic Advance Nurse Practitioners in UHG. Ultimately there will be four ANP's who will deliver core services within the cardiothoracic surgical programme. These include autonomy in clinical practice, expert practice, professional and clinical leadership and research.

Research and Teaching:
Links have already been formed with REMEDI to incorporate stem cell therapy in ischaemic heart disease. We will collaborate with cancer research groups already established within the hospital. All staff will be encouraged to get involved in research and to register for postgraduate research degrees.

SHO’s coming to the unit are placed in Basic Surgical Training Posts in order to formally advance their surgical training. Once the unit is fully developed, it will eventually be involved in advanced cardiothoracic training.

The Department is fully committed to improving its standards of care. Clinical audit and CME is a regular feature within the Department.

Nurse education programmes are being developed with the National University of Ireland, Galway. These include higher diplomas in cardiothoracic nursing, coronary care nursing, perioperative nursing and intensive care nursing. There are a number of diploma, degree, masters and PHD programmes at the National University of Ireland, Galway as well as other universities within Ireland.
Links with the National University of Ireland, Galway

The hospital has close links to the National University of Ireland, Galway. Many members of the Consultant Staff hold academic appointments as Professors, Lecturers, or Clinical Lecturers. The Nursing School has recently transferred to NUIG from Galway Regional Hospitals.

A higher diploma in cardiothoracic nursing and a higher diploma in coronary care nursing are currently under development at NUIG, to facilitate nurse education in the West of Ireland. Research is already a key part of the unit and we will be building on the partnerships already in place. New state of the art treatments and technologies will be introduced into the clinical area to ensure high quality efficient care is delivered to all patients.

The progressive expansion of the Cardiology and Cardiothoracic services in UHG has occurred with the ongoing support of the HSE, the National Cardiovascular Health Strategy and Croí, the West of Ireland Cardiology Foundation.

CROÍ - West of Ireland Cardiology Foundation

Since it’s inception in 1985, Croí, the West of Ireland Cardiology Foundation has collaborated and worked in partnership with the Department of Cardiology, UHG. Being a registered charity, Croí is funded entirely by voluntary contributions. The aim of Croí is to play a leading role in ensuring that the people of the West of Ireland receive the highest attainable level of cardiovascular healthcare, based on the best international standards.

Croí pursues this aim by supporting and developing initiatives in all areas of cardiac care, including in-hospital patient care, interventional cardiology, heart failure and other specialised clinics, cardiac surgery, patient care in the community, family support, disease prevention, community education and cardiovascular research.

Croí funding supports:
~ Research
~ Training Supports and Bursaries
~ Patient Resource Materials
~ Cardiac Ambulance Development
~ Hospital Cardiology Development
~ Community Health, Education and Rehabilitation Initiatives
~ Public / Community Access Defibrillation
Living in Galway

Galway, the historic ‘city of the tribes’ is the fastest growing city in Ireland. A University City, noted for its welcome and friendliness; it is the cultural capital of the western seaboard. Described as the ‘gateway to the west’, Galway is a designated location for government investment in infrastructure and development, not just in the city, but also the suburbs, surrounding towns and townlands. Music, festivals, horse racing, pubs, restaurants, shops, theatres and most of all Galway people, combine to create a unique location to live and work. Surrounded by Galway Bay, famed by song, and scenic Connemara with its magnificent and picturesque landscape, the city offers everything to singles, couples and families alike.

Galway is well served with good road infrastructure, rail and air links to all the major cities in the country with the capital, Dublin only a 3 hour drive on a very good road or a 2 hour and 20 minute relaxing train journey away. From outside of Ireland you can access Galway from a vast array of cities across Europe, through the regional airports at Galway, Knock and Shannon or via Dublin.

Useful Websites:

www.ryanair.com
www.knockairport.com
www.aerlingus.com
www.shannonairport.com
www.galwayairport.com
www.daft.ie
www.myhome.ie
Please do not hesitate to contact us on any of the following numbers:

**All General Enquiries to:**

- Project Manager: 091 542221
- Cardiology Services: 091 542185
- Cardiothoracic Services: 091 542920

**Recruitment Issues and Career Development:**

- Assistant Director of Nursing 091 544039 / 544038
- Chief 11 Cardiac Technician: 091 542181
- Allied Health Professionals: 091 542221
- Medical Manpower: 091 542122
- Human Resources: 091 544071

**Key websites:**

- Health Services Executive: www.hse.ie
- Galway University Hospital: www.whb.ie
- Vacancies: www.careersinhealthcare.ie
  *(updated every Monday)*
- Croí: www.croi.ie
- National University of Ireland: www.nuigalway.ie
Nurse Registration:

If you are considering working anywhere in Ireland in the future, you will need to register with An Bord Altranais. Registration can take up to 3 months, so this will be one of the first things you should begin to organise

Contact details are:

An Bord Altranais,
31/32 Fitzwilliam Square
Dublin 2.
Tel: 353-1-639 8500
Fax: 353-1-676 3348
Web: www.nursingboard.ie

Medical Registration:
The Medical Council
Lynn House, Portobello Court
Lower Rathmines Road, Dublin 6
Tel 00 353 1 498 3100
Web: www.medicalcouncil.ie

Other disciplines should contact their local body to determine the registration requirements for Ireland.
For Further Information Contact:
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