



National Cancer  
Control Programme



# **EU CANCER MISSION DAY – IRELAND**

**26th SEPTEMBER 2023**

**Herbert Park Hotel, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4**

# EU CANCER MISSION DAY – IRELAND

Tuesday, 26 September 2023

## WELCOME NOTE

### Welcome to EU Cancer Mission Day – Ireland 2023

We are delighted to extend a warm welcome to you all as we gather in Dublin on the 26th of September for the EU Cancer Mission Day – Ireland. This event is the result of a collaborative effort between the All-Island Cancer Research Institute (AICRI) and the National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP), united under the ECHoS project.

EU Cancer Mission Day is not just an event; it is a momentous occasion where the brightest minds and compassionate hearts converge. Here, the synergy between academic researchers, clinician scientists, healthcare professionals, dedicated charity partners, policymakers, and individuals with a lived experiences of cancer takes center stage. Together, we form a vibrant community committed to addressing the multifaceted challenges posed by cancer.

This day promises to be a catalyst for innovation, a forum for sharing invaluable insights, knowledge, and experiences, and a platform for fostering meaningful connections. Through collaborative efforts, we aim to explore groundbreaking approaches to confront the complexities of cancer and drive positive change in the field.

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to those who have played pivotal roles in making this event a reality. Special thanks to Prof. William Gallagher, Dr Rosemarie Gannon and Chantal Halley from the All-Island Cancer Research Institute. Prof. Risteárd Ó Laoide, Prof. Donal Brennan, Dr Ozlem McDonnell, Ciara Mellett and Ruth Ryan from the National Cancer Control Programme for their invaluable contributions.

As we embark on this mission together, let us remember that our collective dedication and determination can lead us to breakthroughs that will impact the lives of countless individuals affected by cancer. We invite you to engage, inspire, and be inspired throughout this day as we work hand in hand toward a future free from the burden of cancer.



# AGENDA

09:30	Registration – Tea and Coffee	
10:00	Welcome and Opening - National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP)	<b>Prof. Risteárd Ó Laoide</b> Director, National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP)
10:10	National Cancer Research Group, NCCP	<b>Prof. Donal Brennan</b> UCD Professor of Gynaecological Oncology Mater Misericordiae University Hospital
10:20	All-Island Cancer Research Institute (AICRI)	<b>Prof. William Gallagher</b> Full Professor of Cancer Biology, UCD Co-Lead, All-Island Cancer Research Institute
10:30	EU Cancer Mission and role of Mission Board	<b>Dr Amanda Drury</b> Dublin City University EU Cancer Mission Board Member
10:40	National Cancer Mission Hub in Ireland	<b>Prof. Donal Brennan</b> <b>Prof. William Gallagher</b> University College Dublin
<b>10:50</b>	<b>Session 1: Ireland's Participation in EU Cancer Mission Projects</b>	
	<b>Co- Chairs:</b> Prof. Roisin Connolly, UCC and Prof. Donal Brennan, UCD	
10:50	Short presentations of two projects followed by panel discussion	<b>Prof. Ray McDermott</b> St. Vincent's University Hospital ( <b>DE-ESCALATE</b> )
10:55		<b>Prof. Maeve Lowery</b> Trinity St. James's Cancer Institute ( <b>CCI4EU</b> )
11:00		<b>Panel Discussion:</b>  <b>Dr Irene Castellano</b> HRB and National Contact Point  <b>Prof. William Gallagher</b> UCD and AICRI ( <b>UNCAN.eu</b> and <b>ECHoS</b> )  <b>Dr Amanda Drury</b> DCU and Cancer Mission Board Member  <b>Prof. Martin O'Sullivan</b> Consultant Surgeon, BreastCheck, CUH, Bon Secours Cork ( <b>ThermoBreast</b> )
11:30	Tea and Coffee Break	

<b>11:50</b>	<b>Session 2: How Can We All Benefit from Europe's Beating Cancer Plan?</b>	
	<b>Co-Chairs:</b> Averil Power (CEO, Irish Cancer Society) and Prof. Michael Kerin (University of Galway)	
11:50	Short presentations of two projects followed by panel discussion	<b>Prof. Josephine Hegarty</b> University College Cork ( <b>PROTECT-EUROPE</b> )
11:55		<b>Prof. Jarushka Naidoo</b> Royal College of Surgeons Ireland/Beaumont Hospital ( <b>SOLACE</b> )
12:00		<p><b>Panel Discussion:</b></p> <p><b>Dr Amanda Daly</b> HRB and National Contact Point (EU4Health)</p> <p><b>Prof. David Galvin</b> Mater Misericordiae University Hospital and UCD (<b>PRAISE-U</b>)</p> <p><b>Helen Simon</b> Department of Health (<b>CRANE</b>)</p> <p><b>Prof. Niall O'Higgins</b> Professor Emeritus of Surgery, UCD Co-Chair, <b>INTERACT-EUROPE</b></p> <p><b>Dr Charlene Deane</b> Beacon Hospital, Sandyford (<b>TOGAS</b>)</p>
<b>12:30</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	
<b>13:15</b>	<b>Keynote Address</b>	<b>Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD</b>
<b>13:30</b>	<b>Session 3: The Lived Experience at the Heart of National and European Cancer Initiatives</b>	
	<b>Co-Chairs:</b> Prof. Amanda McCann and Aidan McCormick, Patient Advocate, AICRI and Chair of Northern Ireland Cancer Research Consumer Forum	
13:30		<p><b>Panel discussion:</b></p> <p><b>Alan Pearson</b> Childhood Cancer Ireland</p> <p><b>Yvonne O'Meara</b> Women's Cancer Survivorship Research Coordinator, UCD</p> <p><b>Jacqueline Daly</b> East Galway &amp; Midlands Cancer Support Group</p> <p><b>Roberta Horgan</b> Lynch Syndrome Ireland</p>

<b>14:10 Session 4: Co-ordination of Cancer Research at National and European Levels</b>		
<b>Co-Chairs</b> - Eibhlin Mulroe, CEO, Cancer Trials Ireland and Prof. Tony Holohan		
14:10	Short presentations of two projects followed by panel discussion	<b>Ebba Hallersjö Hult</b> Head of Vision Zero Cancer, Sweden
14:15		<b>Prof. Mark Lawler</b> Queen's University Belfast, European Groundshot
14:20		<b>Panel discussion:</b>  <b>Dr Rosemarie Gannon</b> AICRI (All-Island Cancer Research Institute)  <b>Dr Teresa Maguire</b> Health Research Board  <b>Yasmin Fonseca</b> ECHOs project  <b>Dr Frances Drummond</b> Breakthrough Cancer Research
<b>14:50 Session 5: Engagement with Ireland's National Cancer Mission Hub going forward</b>		
<b>Co-Chairs:</b> Dr Irene Castellano, Health Research Board and Prof. William Gallagher, UCD		
14:50		<b>Kay Duggan-Walls, European Commission</b> Expectations from the EC in respect of National Cancer Mission Hubs and future opportunities  Open Discussion
15:30	Closing Remarks	<b>Prof. William Gallagher</b> University College Dublin
<b>15:45</b>	<b>Close</b>	
15:45 - 16:45	<b>Further networking opportunity</b>	Reception in Hotel Foyer

# EU CANCER MISSION

## DAY – IRELAND

**WELCOME & OPENING**

Tuesday, 26 September 2023



### **Welcome and Opening**

#### **Professor Risteárd Ó Laoide**

**Director of the National Cancer Control Programme**

Professor Risteárd Ó Laoide is Director of the National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP). He is a Consultant Radiologist at St. Vincent's University Hospital and Clinical Professor of Radiology at University College Dublin. Formerly, Risteárd was Medical Director of St. Vincent's Healthcare Group and Clinical Director of Ireland East Hospital Group. He is a medical graduate of Trinity College Dublin, completed his radiology residency at St. Vincent's University Hospital in Dublin and subsequently undertook a Fellowship in Abdominal Imaging and Intervention at the University of California, San Diego. He is a Fellow and Dean Emeritus of the Faculty of Radiologists, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. He is also a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland and a Fellow of the Royal College of Radiologists (UK).



#### **National Cancer Research Group, NCCP** **Professor Donal Brennan**

**UCD Professor of Gynaecological Oncology Mater Misericordiae University Hospital**

Donal Brennan is a Clinician Scientist who graduated from the UCD School of Medicine and received a PhD in Cancer Biology from UCD. His research interests include ovarian cancer immunology, obesity related carcinogenesis and the development of evidence-based survivorship services for women living with and after cancer. He has helped develop and continues to work with a number of patient advocacy groups, firmly believing that patients should be involved in all stages of research and service development plans. Donal has received several awards for research, and was the inaugural recipient European Young Researcher of the Year in 2010. In 2016 he was appointed as UCD Professor of Gynaecological Oncology and Consultant Gynaecological Oncologist at the Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, Dublin. Donal and his team subsequently developed the UCD Gynaecological Oncology Group which was accredited as an ESGO Centre for Ovarian Cancer surgery in 2020 and ESGO training site in 2021 and is now the largest gynaecological cancer centre in Ireland. Donal is also a principal investigator in Systems Biology Ireland and leads multiple clinical and translational research projects. In 2023 he was appointed National Clinical Lead for Cancer Research in Ireland.



# WELCOME & OPENING



## **All-Island Cancer Research Institute (AICRI) Professor William Gallagher**

**Professor of Cancer Biology, UCD School of Biomolecular & Biomedical Science  
Co-Lead, All-Island Cancer Research Institute**

Professor William Gallagher is Full Professor of Cancer Biology at University College Dublin (UCD) and Deputy Director of Precision Oncology Ireland, a large-scale Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) Strategic Partnership Programme involving five academic institutions, six cancer charities and eight companies ([www.precisiononcology.ie](http://www.precisiononcology.ie)). He previously led OPTi-PREDICT, an SFI Investigator Programme focused on identification and validation of prognostic biomarkers for early stage breast and prostate cancer. Currently, Prof. Gallagher is a primary driving force behind the All-Island Cancer Research Institute (AICRI), which is creating an overarching framework for cancer research across the entire island of Ireland (@AICRIproject). AICRI-linked programmes were recently awarded over 12 million euro under the recent HEA North-South Research Programme. From 2016-2021, Professor Gallagher was Director of the UCD Conway Institute of Biomolecular and Biomedical Research, one of Ireland's largest biomedical research facilities. From 2013-2019, he was the Director of BREAST-PREDICT, which was the first Irish Cancer Society Collaborative Cancer Research Centre (CCRC) to be funded ([www.breastpredict.com](http://www.breastpredict.com)). This country-wide CCRC, which was supported to the level of €7.5 million and involved six academic institutions, as well as Cancer Trials Ireland. Prof. Gallagher has received a number of awards for his research and innovation achievements in the oncology arena, including the NovaUCD 2011 Innovation Award, the inaugural Irish Association for Cancer Research Medal in 2017, the SFI Entrepreneurship Award in 2019 and the SFI Researcher of the Year Award in 2021. He has filed/been awarded multiple patents and has acted as consultant for a wide variety of industrial parties within the biomedical sphere. Prof. Gallagher has co-founded two molecular diagnostics companies, OncoMark Ltd. and OncoAssure Ltd., the former being acquired in March 2021 by US diagnostics company Cepheid.



## **EU Cancer Mission and role of Mission Board Dr Amanda Drury**

**Dublin City University EU Cancer Mission Board Member**

Dr Amanda Drury is an Associate Professor in General Nursing in the School of Nursing, Psychotherapy and Community Health, Dublin City University, Ireland. Her research interests span the areas of supportive and palliative care in cancer and chronic illness, and aims to enhance understanding of the health and well-being of people affected by cancer, including the personal, social and healthcare factors which influence these outcomes. She is a member of the European Cancer Mission Board and a Board Member of the European Oncology Nursing Society (EONS), and Chair of the EONS Research Working Group.

## National Cancer Mission Hub in Ireland



**Professor William Gallagher**



**Professor Donal Brennan**

### SESSION ONE

## IRELAND'S PARTICIPATION IN EU CANCER MISSION PROJECTS

**Co-Chairs: Professor Roisin Connolly and Professor Donal Brennan**

### Professor Roisin Connolly

**Director of Cancer Research UCC and Principal Investigator for Cancer Trials Cork at Cork University Hospital**

Professor Roisin Connolly was appointed as the Professor Gerald O'Sullivan Chair in Cancer Research at University College Cork (UCC) and Cork University Hospital in September 2019, and is the Director of Cancer Research UCC. Prior to same, Roisin was an Associate Professor of Oncology (Breast and Ovarian Cancer Program) and Co-Director of the Developmental Therapeutics Program at the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center (SKCCC) at Johns Hopkins, USA. Roisin leads the HRB-funded UCC Cancer Trials Group, which brings together the three Oncology Clinical Trials Units in Cork and Waterford. She is also Co-Director of and a Principal Investigator with Cancer Trials Cork at CUH. She held the role of Co-Chair of the Cancer Trials Ireland Breast Disease Specific Group from 2020-2023 and is a member of the AICRI Steering Committee. Her goal is to improve outcomes for patients with cancer through innovative clinical and translational research, in collaboration with UCC, national and international researchers.



**Professor Donal Brennan**




## IRELAND'S PARTICIPATION IN EU CANCER MISSION PROJECTS

### **Presenting: DE-ESCALATE**

#### **Professor Ray McDermott**

##### **St. Vincent's University Hospital**




In 2006, Dr McDermott was instrumental in establishing Ireland as a main member of the Eastern Co-Operative Group, the largest clinical trials group in the USA with over 70 active studies. Dr McDermott is the Principal Investigator for Ireland in this initiative and is involved in twice yearly meetings with ECOG to develop this relationship. Under the auspices of the National Cancer Control Programme and the establishment of "Centres of Excellence", Dr McDermott's public hospital commitment was split between AMNCH and St Vincent's University Hospital, where he pursues his interest in genito-urinary and gastro-intestinal cancers. Dr McDermott is the National Cancer Control Programme leader in guideline development for prostate cancer and sits on the new drug evaluation committee across all diseases. He is the clinical lead of the All Ireland Clinical Oncology Research Group and Chair of the Genito-Urinary Disease Specific Sub-Group. He has personally accrued over 500 patients to clinical trials in the last 5 years and has written 5 studies which are currently open to accrual through ICORG, many in collaboration with industry partners. He has recently opened the first in man combination study of alfaradin and enzalutamide in castrate resistant prostate cancer with support from Bayer and Astellas. He has formalised a collaboration with the Dana Farber Cancer Institute, ANZUP-the Australian clinical trials group- and the Royal Marsden in two major Phase III clinical trials in prostate cancer involving enzalutamide with ICORG as European sponsor.

### **Presenting: CCI4EU**

#### **Professor Maeve Lowery**

##### **Trinity St. James's Cancer Institute**



Professor Maeve Lowery is Professor of Translational Cancer Medicine at Trinity College Dublin and Consultant Medical Oncologist at St James Hospital. Professor Lowery is chairperson of the Cancer Molecular Diagnostics Advisory Group of the National Cancer Control Program (NCCP). Her clinical and translational research involves design and conduction of clinical trials in patients with gastrointestinal malignancies, incorporating translational study endpoints to validate predictive and prognostic biomarkers, identify mechanisms of resistance and guide the development of rational therapeutic strategies. Her translational research interests use of real time genomic profiling to identify novel therapeutic strategies for gastrointestinal cancers, identification of non coding alterations as modifiers of the DNA damage response pathway and generation of organoid models of cancer as a tool for precision oncology as a member of the PRECODE consortium. Her work is supported by the Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund (<https://www.pcrf.org.uk>), Science Foundation Ireland, through the Precision Oncology Ireland Consortium and the EU Horizon 2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Programme.

## PANEL DISCUSSION:



### **Dr Irene Castellano**

**HRB and National Contact Point**

Irene is a Project Officer in EU programmes and policy at the Health Research Board (HRB). In the HRB, Irene holds the National Contact Point (NCP) position for Horizon Europe Health in Ireland and works in open access. She represents the HRB in the [Health-NCP-Net 3.0 \(HNN 3.0\) project](#), which is a network of NCPs in the area of Health. She is also the chair of the Ireland Chapter of the Marie Curie Alumni Association (MCAA). Irene has been working in research funding management since 2020. Beyond Horizon Europe, she previously worked on enterprise facing programmes, challenge funding for international development and on policy aspects such as the gender dimension in research and narrative CVs. Irene was a biomedical researcher for over 8 years, working in different countries and settings including industry and academia. The focus of her research was skin biology, including wound healing, light interaction with the skin and skin pigmentation.



### **Professor William Gallagher**



### **Dr Amanda Drury**

### **Professor Martin O'Sullivan**

**Consultant Surgeon, BreastCheck Southern Unit, Cork University Hospital, Bon Secours Hospital Cork and University College Cork**

Professor Martin O'Sullivan is a UCC graduate. He is the Lead Surgeon with the National Breast Screening Programme (BreastCheck) Southern Unit and is a consultant surgeon in CUH and the Bon Secours Hospital. He completed the Irish Higher Surgical Training Scheme in General Surgery and completed a Society of Surgical Oncology Breast Fellowship in the Fox Chase Cancer Center, Philadelphia, where he stayed on for dedicated plastic surgery training also. He was the first Oncoplastic surgeon to be appointed in the Cork-Kerry region. He has >50 publications in peer-reviewed journals and >100 communications to learned societies/meetings, both national and international, including invited lectures. He has collaborated with colleagues in the Tyndall National Institute regarding novel techniques to diagnose breast cancer and benign breast diseases. He has secured funding of >€1.124 million from Science Foundation Ireland, Molecular Medicine Ireland, Irish Research Council Enterprise Partnership Scheme (IRC EPS) and Enterprise Ireland for this project. Two post-graduate students have been awarded PhDs to date with this work. He is the Irish PI in a multi-centre study (UCC is the Irish site) evaluating an innovative non-contact and harmless screening modality in breast cancer detection and patient monitoring. EU grant funding of €11,432,045 has been secured for this study. Professor O'Sullivan is the Lead breast clinician for the National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP) and has numerous leadership roles within the NCCP. He is Chair of the BreastCheck surgical group and is the current President of the Society of Irish Breast Surgeons.



## HOW CAN WE ALL BENEFIT FROM EUROPE'S BEATING CANCER PLAN?

**Co-Chairs: Averil Power and Professor Michael Kerin**



### **Averil Power**

**CEO, Irish Cancer Society**

Averil Power is the CEO of the Irish Cancer Society, Ireland's largest cancer charity. The Irish Cancer Society is a community of patients, survivors, volunteers, supporters, health and social care professionals and researchers, working for a future where no one dies from cancer. The Society directly provides information, services and support to people affected by cancer; funds world class cancer research; and drives improvements in public services through advocacy and campaigning. The Society is the leading voluntary funder of cancer research in Ireland and spends €3-4 million per year to support over 120 researchers across the country. Central to this investment, is a commitment to work in partnership with key stakeholders both nationally and across the EU, to drive forward improvements across the entire cancer pathway from prevention, early detection, diagnosis and treatment, as well as the care and quality of life of people affected by cancer.



### **Professor Michael Kerin**

**Chair of Surgery at the University of Galway**

Prof. Michael Kerin is Chair of Surgery at the University of Galway and Director of the Cancer Managed Clinical Academic Network (MCAN) for Saolta University Health Care Group. As Consultant Surgeon he has a special interest in breast and endocrine cancer. He is Research Director of the National Breast Cancer Research Institute, Principal Investigator with the SFI funded Precision Oncology Ireland, the All Island Cancer Research Institute (AICRI) and co-investigator of numerous other collaborative cancer research initiatives.

## HOW CAN WE ALL BENEFIT FROM EUROPE'S BEATING CANCER PLAN?

### **Presenting: PROTECT-EUROPE Prof. Josephine Hegarty**

**University College Cork**

Prof. Josephine Hegarty, Professor of Nursing, School of Nursing and Midwifery, University College Cork (UCC), Ireland. Professor Hegarty trained as a general nurse in Cork University Hospital and attained her BSc, MSc in nurse education and PhD at University College Cork. During her clinical career Josephine has worked in Cork University Hospital, Central Middlesex Hospital, London, and the Bon Secours Hospital, Cork. In her academic career, Josephine has been Head of School and acted as Dean of Graduate Studies at University College Cork. Josephine has attained funding and managed grants from national and international agencies and published over 85 peer reviewed publications and 14 commissioned reports. Her research interests pertain to oncology, evidence-based practice, patient safety and contemporary nursing issues (e.g., scope of practice, continuing competence). She supervises PhD and MSc students for their research dissertations. Josephine leads the Enhancing Cancer Awareness and Survivorship (ECASP) supporting individuals and their families on the cancer survivorship trajectory. Prof Hegarty is lead applicant on the "Implementation Network Europe for Cancer Survivorship Care (INE-CSC)" EU COST Action. Josephine has attained funding and managed grants from national and international agencies and published over 85 peer reviewed publications and 14 commissioned reports.



### **Presenting: SOLACE Prof. Jarushka Naidoo**

**Royal College of Surgeons Ireland/Beaumont Hospital**

Prof. Jarushka Naidoo is a Consultant Medical Oncologist at Beaumont RCSI Cancer Centre in Dublin, Ireland and an Adjunct Professor of Oncology at Johns Hopkins University. Prof. Naidoo graduated with her medical degree (MB BCh BAO) from Trinity College Dublin, and completed internal medicine and a medical oncology training through the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. She then completed an awarded advanced medical oncology fellowship at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (New York), and joined the faculty at Johns Hopkins University in 2015. At Johns Hopkins, she led a portfolio of clinical trials and translational studies focused on immunotherapy for lung cancer and immune-related toxicity. She founded and co-chaired the multidisciplinary Johns Hopkins Immune-related Toxicity Team from 2016-2021. Dr. Naidoo leads investigator-initiated trials for patients with lung cancer, with a focus on stage III non-small lung cancer and CNS metastases. She is a leader in the field of immune-related toxicity, having published the first comprehensive analysis of immune-related pneumonitis (Best of J Clin Oncol 2017), bullous pemphigoid (Best of Cancer Immunol Res 2016), and inflammatory arthritis (Ann Rheum Dis 2016). She is the Chair of the Immunotherapy Subcommittee of the US NRG Clinical Trials Cooperative Group, and develops the ASCO and SITC Immune-Related Toxicity Guideline Panels. She is the recipient of several grants and awards including a US NIH KL2 Clinical Scholar Award and a Lung Cancer Foundation of America/IASLC Young Investigator Award. Since her return to Ireland, she serves as the Chair of the Lung Cancer Disease-specific subgroup (DSSG) of Cancer Trials Ireland, is the Founder and Chair of the Irish national lung cancer research group, the 'Irish Lung Cancer Alliance,' and a national immunotherapy toxicity network through the RCPI. Prof Naidoo was named the Irish Cancer Society's Clinician Research Leader Award 2021.



## PANEL DISCUSSION:



### **Dr Amanda Daly**

**Programme Manager at the Health Research Board**

Dr. Amanda Daly is a Programme Manager within the International Cooperation unit at the Health Research Board (HRB). She is the National Focal Point for the EU Public Health programme (EU4Health), working closely with the Department of Health to optimise EU funding for health and social care in Ireland. She also has responsibility for North-South and European research activities including EU co-funding initiatives and EU Partnerships. She undertook her PhD in Cancer Research UK, London and continued to work in academia before moving to Cancer Trials Ireland as a Clinical Trials Associate. She then transitioned to research management, first as a research manager with the Irish Cancer Society and then in Science Foundation Ireland (SFI). She is a Board member of several international consortia and is a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, and University College London.



### **Professor David Galvin MD FRCS**

**Associate Professor (UCD) and Consultant Urologist, Mater and St Vincent's University Hospitals, Dublin**

Graduated from the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) 1996. Basic surgical training (BST) based in the West of Ireland. MD Thesis at the Mater Hospital and University College Dublin. Higher Surgical Training in Urology in Dublin and Galway. Awarded FRCS(Urol) from the RCSI 2006. Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centre, New York (Fellowship in Urological Oncology) 2008-2010. Consultant in Urological Oncology in Essex, UK and later in Mater and St. Vincent's University hospitals funded by the National Cancer Control Program (NCCP) Associate Professor in College of Medicine, UCD. Principal Investigator of the Irish Prostate Cancer Outcomes Research (IPCOR) study, funded by Movember and the Irish Cancer Society for €1.75 million. Chair, National Cancer Prostate cancer leads group from 2012 to 2018, co-chaired the Prostate biopsy infection committee and currently Chair the National Prostate cancer guidelines committee.



### **Helen Simon**

**Department of Health (CRANE)**

Helen Simon is a senior manager in the Cancer Policy Unit of the Department of Health. The focus of her work is the National Cancer Strategy 2017-2026. In this role, Helen supports and drives the implementation of the National Cancer Strategy through close engagement with the National Cancer Control Programme. As part of this work, she also provides performance and budgetary oversight on the National Cancer Registry. Having worked as an Occupational Therapist after qualifying from Trinity College Dublin, Helen has always had a keen interest in health policy and patient outcomes. Since joining the Department of Health in 2018, she has sought to ensure her patient and clinical experience is central to her work, initially with a programme of work including the Nursing Homes Support Scheme and the National Positive Ageing Strategy and more recently the National Cancer Strategy. Helen represents Ireland at key European and global institutions. Currently she is actively involved in the work of the CrANE joint action, which is key to supporting Europe's Beating Cancer Plan and is working to establish a network of comprehensive cancer centres across EU Member States. She is particularly interested in ensuring that the Irish experience is represented and that Irish patients will benefit from these and other EU initiatives.

## PANEL DISCUSSION:



### **Dr Charlene Deane**

**Beacon Hospital, Sandyford (TOGAS)**

Charlene Deane, MRCPI, MSc Clinical Research, is a researcher at the Beacon involved in the EU4 Health funded project, TOGAS, a programme focused on the implementation of gastric cancer screening strategies in the European Union. Charlene graduated from Medicine in NUI, Galway in 2015 and went on to pursue a Masters in Clinical Research and Diploma in BioInnovation for which she was awarded a first class honours. Presently, she is in the final stages of her Higher Specialist Training in Gastroenterology while simultaneously working towards her MD qualification.



### **Professor Niall O'Higgins**

**Professor Emeritus of Surgery, UCD Co-Chair, INTERACT-EUROPE**

Professor Niall O'Higgins is Emeritus Professor of Surgery at University College Dublin and was for 30 years the Professor and Head of the UCD Department of Surgery at St. Vincent's University Hospital. He was responsible for the teaching of surgery of medical students in the university hospital. As consultant general surgeon he had special interest in breast cancer and endocrine surgery. He established the first Breast Clinic in Ireland in 1979 and promoted the development of Breast Clinics throughout the country. He was deeply involved in the initiation of the BreastCheck screening programme. He was also Chair of the first screening committee for colorectal cancer and has been active in the extension of health screening services throughout the State having recently completed a four-year term as Foundation Chair of the National Screening Advisory Committee. He was centrally associated with the planning and development of specialist cancer centres in Ireland. His clinical and research work resulted in over 300 scientific publications and book chapters mainly on breast cancer research and oncology practice. He was President of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and from 2012 to 2017 was Chair of the University of Limerick Hospitals Group Board. He has received international recognition with numerous honorary awards in the UK, the United States, Europe and Asia. He was President of both the European Cancer Organisation and the European Society of Surgical Oncology. His proposal for modifications in the training of oncologists has led to the establishment of the INTERACT-EUROPE project of the European Commission devoted to interdisciplinary training of cancer specialists across the EU. He is Co-Chair of this programme which has received much international support as it develops. Among his advocacy roles is the promotion of Right to be Forgotten legislation for people who have recovered from cancer.

## THE LIVED EXPERIENCE AT THE HEART OF NATION AND EUROPEAN CANCER INITIATIVES

**Co-Chairs: Prof. Amanda McCann and Aidan McCormick**



### **Dr Amanda McCann**

#### **Principal Investigator and Senior Conway Fellow in the UCD Conway**

Dr. Amanda McCann PhD, is a Principal Investigator and Senior Conway Fellow in the UCD Conway Institute of Biomolecular and Biomedical Research in University College Dublin (UCD), Ireland. She is also Professor in the UCD School of Medicine and was Head of Pathology within the School from 2015–2018. Her group's specific cancer research interests are focused on understanding the mechanisms underlying chemoresistance for women presenting with triple negative breast cancer (TNBC) including comparative oncology approaches. In this regard she has published extensively in the area of cancer cell senescence and the role of extracellular vesicles/exosomes in the chemoresistant phenotype. She was also a member of the founding committee in the establishment of the International Cellular Senescence Association (ICSA). In 2017, Amanda established the UCD Centre in Translational Oncology (UCTO) with an official launch in September 2018. In 2016, she established and currently chairs the UCD Patient Voice in Cancer Research (PVCR) committee made up of patients, researchers and health care professionals, that aims to engage the general public and cancer survivors in cancer research ensuring a two-way dialogue between patients and researchers. In December 2019, she was awarded a VIA (Values in Action) award for her work in this regard. Within UCD, Amanda has been on an expert panel for the Rapid Realist Review (RRR) detailing the mechanisms that enable the reciprocal involvement of seldom heard groups in health and social care. This initiative is funded through a HRB Ignite award, where UCD in collaboration with 10 partner organisations is developing a network and resource platform to firmly embed patient and public involvement (PPI) in UCD's research learning and teaching activities. In relation to patient advocate groups, she previously was a Co-Director of IPPOSI and research advisor to Debra Ireland. In 2017, Amanda was elected President of the Irish Association for Cancer Research (IACR), and has led on patient involvement with cancer researchers across Ireland as part of the annual IACR conferences. As President of the IACR, she represented the association on the European Association for Cancer Research (EACR) National Societies Committee (2018) and was previously Honorary Secretary of the IACR 1998–2000.



### **Mr Aidan McCormick**

#### **Patient Advocate, AICRI Steering Committee**

## PANEL DISCUSSION:



### **Alan P. Pearson, Ph.D. (Patient Advocate)**

#### **Childhood Cancer Ireland**

Alan Pearson is the parent of a child who passed away after six years of treatment for Relapse/Refractory Neuroblastoma. Throughout that period, he became an active member of the Irish and European parents' networks. Alan holds a position as a member and former Director (voluntary) of the parent-led charity "Childhood Cancer Ireland," which maintains membership in Childhood Cancer International. In this capacity, he advocates on behalf of children in Ireland diagnosed with cancer, along with their families, aiming to enhance access to innovative therapies and contribute to strategies for improved care and outcomes. Additionally, Alan holds qualifications as a Biotechnologist (B.Sc) and a Chemical Engineer (Ph.D.). Professionally, he is an experienced biopharmaceutical professional with a career spanning over 20 years, encompassing research, development, engineering, and operations. His expertise encompasses various domains, including small molecule, oral solid dose, biologics, and cell and gene therapy, with a significant focus on the therapeutic area of oncology.



### **Yvonne O'Meara**

#### **Women's Cancer Survivorship Research Coordinator, UCD**

Yvonne O'Meara is a Systemic Psychotherapist and Psychosocial Oncologist. Yvonne has worked as a Medical Social Worker in psychosocial oncology and palliative care since 2004 in teaching hospitals in Ireland and North America. Yvonne is the co-founder of the ISGO-PPI (Irish Society of Gynaecological Oncology Public and Patient Involvement). Yvonne has an expertise in supporting and promoting patient lead research. Yvonne's special interests are anticipatory grief, bereavement and psychosexual dysfunction post cancer. In 2020 Yvonne took up a post at the UCD School of Medicine as Women's Cancer Survivorship Research coordinator based in the Mater Misericordiae University Hospital. In her spare time, she likes to think she can influence her three daughters positively.



## PANEL DISCUSSION:



### **Jacqueline Daly**

#### **East Galway & Midlands Cancer Support Group**

Jacqueline is a former cancer patient and co-founder of East Galway & Midlands Cancer Support, as well as the Director of Services. She is a patient advocate and campaigner, dedicated to raising awareness and lobbying for change within local and national government agencies. Jacqueline actively participates as a member of the Public and Patient Involvement Group of the Irish Society of Gynaecological Oncology and serves as a patient representative on the board of the Society of Sexual Medicine Ireland. She has contributed to the ECPC Publication 'Living Well During Cancer Treatments,' co-authored the Structured Education Programme (STEP) designed to support men with Prostate Cancer, and has taken part in ESMO Rare Cancer Patient Advocate Training in Milan. Jacqueline has also delivered speeches at ESMO and EAU Conferences and is a valued member of the Let's Talk Prostate Cancer expert group in Ireland and Europe, the HPV action steering group, and the gender inequalities network with ECO. She is also affiliated with the Independent Cancer Patients Voice (ICP) and has successfully completed the Science for Patient Advocates study week at Barts Cancer Institute. Jacqueline maintains her membership with Cancer Patients Europe and holds the position of vice-chair. Additionally, she is a complementary therapist specialising in Bio Energy, Healing Touch, and Reiki, known for her role in developing and presenting community outreach programs. Furthermore, she is a facilitator of the Survive and Thrive Self-Management program for Cancer Survivors and the CLIMB program, which supports children aged 5 to 12 coping with an adult in their life diagnosed with cancer. The primary driving force behind her patient advocacy efforts is Jacqueline's personal experience with cancer and her role as a caregiver for her husband during his prostate cancer diagnosis. Her firsthand encounters with the turbulence of a cancer diagnosis have fueled her passion for enhancing and easing the cancer experience for others.



### **Roberta Horgan**

#### **Vice-chair - Lynch Syndrome Ireland**

Patient advocate and PPI representative for people affected by genetic cancer predispositions, in particular Lynch Syndrome. Lynch Syndrome Ireland is a voluntary organisation and our work centers around providing information and support for families affected by Lynch Syndrome, raising awareness, improved diagnosis and to support research in the area. Roberta is also a patient rep for the HSE NCCP new Hereditary Cancer Model of Care and member of the newly formed Lynch Syndrome Europe Group - a working group comprised of several LS patient organisations from across Europe. Co-author - Experiences of living with Lynch Syndrome: A reflexive thematic analysis <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejon.2022.102117> First study evaluating the psychosocial impact of living with LS in an Irish setting. Roberta is a past recipient of the Laura Brennan Award & Irish Cancer Society PPI in Research Champion Award.

## SESSION FOUR

### CO-ORDINATION OF CANCER RESEARCH AT NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN LEVELS

**Co-Chairs: Eibhlin Mulroe, CEO, Cancer Trials Ireland and Prof. Tony Holohan**



#### **Eibhlin Mulroe**

**CEO, Cancer Trials, Ireland**

Eibhlin has been the CEO of Cancer Trials Ireland since 2015. She leads a cross functional team of 55 scientific staff including clinical operations, biometrics, Quality and Pharmacovigilance. In recent years, Eibhlin, the CTI team and its Host Institution, RCSI, run the National Cancer Trials Infrastructure Award, working with Cancer Trials Groups situated in Irish academic hospitals in Dublin, Cork, Galway, Waterford and Limerick. The Irish Cancer Society is a key partner of Cancer Trials Ireland and under her leadership recently signed a €3 million Funding and Partnership Agreement over 3 years. She has a BSocSc Hons from Queens University Belfast and is an MBA graduate from the Smurfit Business School, University College Dublin. She has a Diploma in Corporate Direction from the Institute of Directors. In her early career Eibhlin worked in Irish Politics and then the NGO sector. In July 2007, she became the first CEO of the Irish Platform for Patients' Organisations, Science and Industry (IPPOSI) and Chair of a Task Force in the European Patient Academy for Therapeutic Innovation (EUPATI). Eibhlin was appointed by the Irish Minister for Health to the Department of Health Steering Group on Rare Disease Policy in 2010, she represented patients on the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) Research Ethics Advisory Board, HIQA, HTA Advisory Board and was a member of the HSE Patient's Forum. Eibhlin led IPPOSI to partake in 2 EC Research Consortiums, BBMRI and EUPATI, the latter is a unique initiative to develop an EU Patient Academy.

She is a member of:

Steering Group of the Irish Health Research Forum

Advisory Board of the Cork Clinical Research Centre



#### **Professor Tony Holohan**

**Adjunct Full Professor of Public Health, College of Health and Agricultural Science UCD**

Tony was appointed in July 2022 as an Adjunct Full Professor of Public Health in University College Dublin (UCD) College of Health and Agricultural Sciences. Tony is also a board member of the Irish Hospice Foundation. He also works as an external consultant on some specific projects with the WHO at the European level. In his former role from 2008 to 2022 as Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Tony was chair of the COVID-19 National Public Health Emergency Response Team and led Ireland's public health response to COVID-19. As CMO, he also led the delivery of the ambitious cross-sectoral Healthy Ireland Initiative and went on to work extensively on policy development in areas such as prevention, alcohol, tobacco, obesity, physical activity, cancer control, patient safety and quality, reproductive health, primary care, health information and health technology assessment. As Deputy CMO from 2001 to 2008, Tony played a leading role in reshaping Ireland's cancer services. He qualified as a doctor from UCD in 1991 and trained as a general practitioner prior to embarking on a career in public health.



## **Ebba Hallersjö Hult**

### **Head of Vision Zero Cancer, Sweden**

Co-founder and Head of the Innovation Milieus Vision Zero Cancer and its flagship initiative Test Bed Sweden for Clinical Trials and the Implementation of Precision Health in Cancer. Together with the national network Genomic Medicine Sweden (GMS) they form a Swedish mission-oriented innovation hub for cancer, that brings together stakeholders from the healthcare system, academia, industry and civil society in the mission to beat cancer. Vision Zero Cancer has a long-term vision of transforming cancer from a deadly to a curable or chronic disease, making sure that more people live longer and better. This requires individualised prevention and care, effective early detection, translational research and novel treatments. The ambition is to increase the impact of innovation through new forms of governance and collaboration. Vision Zero Cancer was founded in 2019 by the National Cancer Coordinator at the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR), AstraZeneca, Elekta, and Stockholm School of Economics. Both Vision Zero Cancer and Test Bed Sweden are financed by the Swedish Innovation Agency Vinnova and coordinated by a team at the Centre for AI, Innovation and the Future of Work at House of Innovation, Stockholm School of Economics Institute for Research. Prior to establishing Vision Zero Cancer in 2019, Hallersjö Hult served as Global Head of Health Care & Life Sciences at the Swedish Trade & Invest Council, Business Sweden, and before that as Trade Commissioner and First Secretary at the Embassy of Sweden in Ukraine. She has broad and extensive experience in leading and running projects in strategy and business development, nationally and internationally in several sectors of society: health care, social care, education, defence, ICT, road safety, energy, and environmental technologies. Hallersjö Hult holds a BSc in Political Science and International Relations from University of Gothenburg.



## **Professor Mark Lawler**

### **Queen's University Belfast, European Groundshot**

Professor Mark Lawler is Professor of Digital Health and Chair in Translational Cancer Genomics at Queen's University Belfast. He is Co-lead of the All Island Cancer Research Institute (AICRI). He is Scientific Director of DATA-CAN, the UK's Health Data Research Hub for Cancer and co-leads Health Data Research UK's (HDR-UK) Research Driver Programme "Big Data for Complex Disease" deploying data to better understand diseases such as cancer and cardiovascular disease. Mark is Chair of the International Cancer Benchmarking Partnership, which sets a benchmark for cancer outcomes globally. He is Chair of the recently published Lancet Oncology European Groundshot Commission, the most comprehensive analysis of cancer research in Europe ever, which reimagines cancer research and its implementation across Europe. Mark has a strong commitment to patient-centred research and addressing cancer inequalities. He was architect of the European Cancer Patients Bill of Rights, launched in the European Parliament (World Cancer Day). He received the 2018 European Health Award, a prestigious award for partnerships that yield real health impact in Europe. His pioneering work on Covid-19 and cancer received the Royal College of Physicians Excellence in Patient Care Award and the prestigious European Communique Award, which recognised the use of data to enhance cancer services and effect policy change. He is a member of the Board of the European Cancer Organisation and co-leads its Special Network on the Impact of Covid-19 on cancer. He also leads the European Code of Cancer Practice initiative which mandates what cancer patients should expect from their health system. He is scientific lead for the European Cancer Pulse, addressing cancer inequalities and their mitigation through a data-driven approach. In 2021, Mark received the Irish Association for Cancer Research's Outstanding Contribution to cancer research award, for his pioneering work on cancer research and care on the island of Ireland. In 2022, he and his team won the prestigious HDR-UK Impact of the Year Award for providing the crucial intelligence to inform a change in policy for treating colorectal cancer.

## PANEL DISCUSSION:

**Dr Rosemarie Gannon****Research Project Manager – AICRI (All-Island Cancer Research Institute)**A portrait of Dr Rosemarie Gannon, a woman with shoulder-length brown hair, wearing a blue sleeveless top and a necklace, smiling. The portrait is framed by a teal hexagonal border.

Dr Gannon is a research project manager based in University College Dublin. She has several years of project management experience and currently manages the AICRI (All-Island Cancer Research Institute) project which strives to create an overarching framework for cancer research on the island of Ireland. She also manages the €4 million HEA funded AICRIstart programme which trains 10 PhD students and 10 postdoctoral researchers in precision cancer medicine. Ten academic institutions across the island of Ireland are participating in this project. Rosemarie is also involved in the establishment of the National Cancer Mission Hub (NCMH) in Ireland through the EU-funded ECHoS project. The National Cancer Control Programme and AICRI are the Ireland partners in this project. From 2020 to 2023, Dr Gannon was a member of the project management team which established AIREN, the All-Ireland Research Excellence Network. She was a member of the UCD Research Managers and Administrators Network (URMAN) advisory group from 2019 – 2023. She successfully managed the EU SWIM project from 2018–2020. This research project developed a model to predict the bathing water quality at selected beaches in Northern Ireland and Ireland. Rosemarie has a PhD in Information and Communication Studies from UCD, a BA Hons in Applied Languages (French and German) from Ulster University and a Certificate in Digital Marketing from Dublin Business School. She recently completed an MSc in Project Management in the UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School.

**Dr Teresa Maguire****Health Research Board**A portrait of Dr Teresa Maguire, a woman with short dark hair and glasses, wearing a dark blazer over a light-colored top, smiling. The portrait is framed by a teal hexagonal border.

Dr Teresa Maguire was appointed Director of Research Strategy and Funding at the Health Research Board in 2020, where she is a member of the Executive team. Prior to her current role, Teresa held various management positions at the HRB, where she played a lead role in building up the HRBs investments and supports for population health and health services research and she was actively involved in the implementation structures for the initial Ireland-Northern Ireland-NCI Cancer Consortium. Teresa currently has oversight responsibility for ensuring that the design, implementation and evaluation of the HRBs research investments advance the dual goals of achieving a research-active, evidence-informed healthcare system and contributing to broader Government research and innovation objectives as set out in IMPACT 2030. Teresa participates on the High-Level Policy Network of Science Europe and is a member of the General Assembly of the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA). She leads an active and diverse programme of policy and governance work in the HRB in areas such as open science, EDI, research culture and data management. In recent years, Teresa has become actively involved in initiatives which seek to put in place solutions to provide secure access to health and social care data for research and innovation purposes, both nationally and across borders. Teresa has a BSc in Pharmacology from University College Dublin, a PhD from the University of Dundee and a Master of Business from the Irish Management Institute.

## PANEL DISCUSSION:



### **Yasmin Fonseca**

#### **ECHoS (Establishing of Cancer Mission Hubs: Networks and Synergies) Project**

Yasmin is an international Project Manager with a proven track record of success in managing EU-funded projects in the areas of digital health, research, and innovation. She holds a background in biochemistry and health management, with specialisation in change management. Yasmin's career is characterised by leading multidisciplinary teams and delivering exceptional results in challenging projects. Yasmin is committed to contributing to healthcare innovations and applying her expertise in shaping the future of EU healthcare. Projects participated and/or coordinated: Coordination team of X-eHealth project (Exchanging Electronic Health Records in a common Framework) Leader of work package 3 (evaluation) and participant of work packages 5 and 7 of the TEHDAS (Towards European Health Data Space) joint action. Leader of Work package 3 (evaluation) and participant of work package 4 (sustainability) of EU-HIP (EU interoperability with HERAIT platform). Participant of eCAN Joint Action (STRENGTHENING EHEALTH FOR CANCER PATIENTS.) Coordination Team of ECHoS Project (Establishing of Cancer Mission Hubs: Networks and Synergies).



### **Dr Frances Drummond**

#### **Breakthrough Cancer Research**

Frances joined Breakthrough Cancer Research in October 2019. Having qualified with a PhD in Biochemistry from University College Cork, Frances shifted her focus to patient focused research for her post-doctoral career. She has fifteen years of experience in cancer research in the National Cancer Registry of Ireland and University College Cork. Frances has published more than 50 peer-reviewed papers and reports. She is also a pre-accredited counsellor and psychotherapist. Frances believes passionately that research is vital to improve health and survival at both the individual and the population level.

## ENGAGEMENT WITH IRELAND'S NATIONAL CANCER MISSION HUB GOING FORWARD

**Co-Chairs: Dr Irene Castellano, Health Research Board and Prof. William Gallagher, UCD**



**Dr Irene Castellano**



**Professor William Gallagher**



### **Kay Duggan-Walls**

**Seconded National Expert, Policy Officer, European Commission**

Kay Duggan-Walls, is Policy Officer and Seconded National Expert at the European Commission's Research and Innovation Directorate. She works in the Combating Diseases Unit on the EU Cancer Mission. Among her responsibilities is supporting the EU ECHoS project to establish National Cancer Mission Hubs. She has worked in the Health Research Board (HRB) as National Contact Point and as an expert on the Health Programme Committee for FP7, Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe for 12 years. During this time, she was also the National Focal Point for the 2nd & 3rd EU Health Programmes (now EU4Health Programme) as well as a Board Member, representing Ireland on the EU Joint Programming Initiative on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). Kay also worked in the HRB on programmes of the Ireland/Northern Ireland/NCI Consortium on Cancer, which included establishing Cancer Trials Ireland and later worked as Group Development Executive at Cancer Trials Ireland. She has over 20 years' experience in research funding management, in health research and European funding and policy at the HRB as well as experience in the university sector. Kay has expertise in clinical research and clinical trials having worked in companies in France and Ireland and in the Irish health sector as well as at Johns Hopkins, Sidney Kimmel Cancer Centre, Baltimore, USA. Kay holds a BSc in Microbiology from the University of Galway and an MSc from the Open University.

## THANK YOU



As we conclude the EU Cancer Mission Day – Ireland 2023, we want to take a moment to express our sincerest gratitude to all attendees, both in person and online.

Today, we witnessed the power of collaboration, the strength of shared knowledge, and the compassion of individuals dedicated to cancer research. From the academic researchers who delve into the depths of discovery to the clinicians who offer care and hope, from our charity partners who provide unwavering support, to policymakers shaping the future, and especially to those with personal experiences of cancer who inspire us with their resilience.

We would like to extend a special thank you to our partners who helped make this day possible: the All-Island Cancer Research Institute (AICRI), the National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP), the ECHoS project, the North South Research Programme and finally the European Commission.

The conversations, connections, and ideas shared today will continue to resonate in the field of cancer research and care.

As we leave this event, let us carry with us the hope, inspiration, and determination to push boundaries, break down barriers, and make a tangible difference in the lives of those affected by cancer.

And don't forget to join us tomorrow at the AICR Showcase: Vision and Mission Event on September 27th at the Herbert Park Hotel. For more information, please visit [www.aicri.org/events](http://www.aicri.org/events) or simply Google "AICRI Showcase Vision and Progress Event."

Once again, thank you for being a part of EU Cancer Mission Day – Ireland 2023.

Your contributions are invaluable, and together, we can make a brighter, cancer-free future a reality.

With best wishes,

All-Island Cancer Research Institute and the National Cancer Control Programme

