

Established in 1986 (under Statutory Instrument No. 279), The Health Research Board promotes, assists, commissions and conducts medical, health, epidemiological and health services research in Ireland.

Liaison and co-operation with other research bodies both in Ireland, the European Union and the United States form an important part of the Board's role.

At the request of the Minister for Health and Children, research relevant to health and health services is undertaken by the Board.



# Contents

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Board Members	2
Chairman's Statement	4
Chief Executive's Report	6
<b>Divisions of the Health Research Board</b>	
The Medical and Health Services Research Division	9
The Child Health Epidemiology Division	12
The Disability Databases Division	15
The Drug Misuse Research Division	17
The Mental Health Research Division	20
The Finance and Administration Division	23
Statement of Board Members' Responsibilities	26
Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General	27
Statement of Accounting Policies	28
Income and Expenditure Account	29
Balance Sheet	30
Cash Flow Statement	31
Notes to the Financial Statements	32
Prompt Payment of Accounts Act 1997	38
<b>Appendix</b>	
<b>A</b> Research Sub-Committees	40
<b>B</b> Representation on National and International Committees	41
<b>C</b> Research Grants and Fellowships Awarded 1999	42

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## Board Members



**Professor Michael B. Murphy, (Chairman)**  
Dean of Medicine,  
University College Cork.



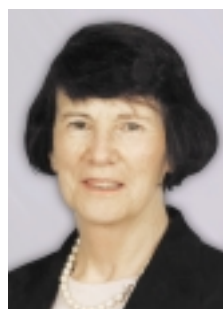
**Professor Hugh Brady,**  
Department of Medicine &  
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Dublin 7.



**Ms. Anne Cleary,**  
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**Mr. Charlie Hardy,**  
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**Professor Bernadette Herity,**  
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**Professor John Feely,**  
Department of Pharmacology  
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Trinity College,  
Dublin 2.



**Professor Desmond Fitzgerald,**  
Department of Clinical  
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Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland,  
Dublin 2.



**Dr. Eibhlín Connolly,**  
Deputy Chief Medical Officer,  
Department of Health & Children,  
Dublin 2.

## Board Members



**Professor Robert Daly,**  
Department of Psychiatry,  
University College Cork.



**Professor Patrick Johnston,**  
Department of Oncology,  
Belfast City Hospital.



**Professor Peter McCarthy,**  
Department of Radiology,  
University College Hospital,  
Galway.



**Mr. Damien Maguire, Solr.,**  
Maynooth,  
Co. Kildare.



**Mr. Edward Rowland,**  
Rathfarnham,  
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**Professor Thomas O'Dowd,**  
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**Dr. Helen Whelton,**  
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**Professor Donald Weir,**  
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St. James's Hospital,  
Dublin 8.



# Chairman's Statement



**Professor Michael B. Murphy, (Chairman)**

Dean of Medicine,  
University College Cork.

The activities of the Board throughout the year were devoted largely to taking stock and laying the foundation for a very different future. As the research environment has been transformed in parallel with the economy, the value of research as a pillar of future economic growth has been recognised in both theory and practice. The publication of the National Development Plan, with its unprecedented commitment to funding the national research capacity, has transformed the vista of what is possible for the new generation of Irish scientists. The commitment to the Technology Foresight Programme, added to the Programme for Research at Third Level Institutes, has guaranteed a very bright future for researchers in basic biomedical sciences. We must anticipate, therefore, major downstream challenges to our researchers working in the applied and population sciences, who will be expected to determine the applicability and value of the findings of basic researchers in enhancing the health of the population.

The stock taking exercise began with a visit by Dr. Michael Dexter, Director of the Wellcome Trust, to establish at first hand the state of Irish biomedical science. Consultations with research workers over three days provided the Trust and the HRB with a broad-brush picture of the many high-quality activities in biomedical science in Ireland and a sober estimate of deficits in manpower, protected research time for academics and clinicians, and deficiencies in physical infrastructure. The visit pinpointed the reluctance of Irish researchers to compete for Wellcome Trust funds, outlining some of the reasons for Ireland's poor performance in Wellcome Trust competitions over many years, and led to a very valuable and successful HRB/Wellcome Trust Briefing Symposium for Irish Researchers in November. The HRB now anticipates a major increment in successful Irish applications for funding under Wellcome Trust Programmes. Arising from the Wellcome Trust interaction, the HRB and the Higher Education Authority jointly commissioned a formal assessment of infrastructural deficit (in buildings and equipment). It is being conducted by the PREST Group from the United Kingdom, and will generate a database that will facilitate prioritisation of future investment of resources for research.

## Chairman's Statement



Throughout the year, Board Members and staff invested much effort in strategic planning. The Board was requested by the Department of Health and Children to develop a strategy for health research, and for the Health Research Board itself, whereby newly available resources could be targeted efficiently. This process included: an evaluation of all ongoing research in the health sector in the State; a compilation of the various mechanisms for funding; identification of the diverse groups and organisations conducting research; the development of principles that might be applied going forward in determining priority, quality measures and the implementation of research programmes. A National Strategy Forum on Health Research is scheduled for Dublin Castle in early 2000, at which all interested constituencies will be consulted on the validity of the analysis and on the proposals for the strategy.

The cultural shift towards an all-Ireland approach, evident for some time in politics and commerce, has also enveloped the HRB. Increasingly close working relationships with the Research and Development Office in the Department of Health, Northern Ireland, have been fostered in 1999. At an operational level, Northern Ireland reviewers have participated widely in our peer review process, the scheme for North/South Collaborative Grants blossomed, and there have been new commitments from the R & D Office in Belfast to co-fund programmes. The Memorandum of Understanding on Cancer Research (MUCR), signed in Belfast in October, offers unprecedented opportunity for cross-border collaboration to develop a strong Irish infrastructure in basic and clinical cancer research. Successful implementation of this programme could lead to parallel initiatives in other research sectors.

While all these new initiatives have been evolving, core activities of the Board have been facilitated by significant increments in funding from the Department of Health and Children. In the interest of minimising administrative overheads and protecting as much funding as possible for its real purpose - the conduct of research - efficiencies have been introduced. The Board commissioned a new website to facilitate dissemination of information and, in the longer term, the electronic submission of applications. On behalf of Board Members, I congratulate Dr. Ruth Barrington and her staff for their dedication and commitment throughout the year and for their enthusiastic embrace of new structures and procedures.

Above all, it is an unprecedented pleasure to acknowledge the recognition the Government has granted to research as a vital economic and cultural priority. We appreciate that this commitment, tangibly expressed through enhanced investment, presents the research community with an onerous, but very welcome, challenge. The Board, in partnership with the other national research agencies, will be delighted to take up the gauntlet.

# Chief Executive's Report



*Dr. Ruth Barrington*

The last year of the twentieth century was a most significant year for research in Ireland, with Government committing an unprecedented level of funding for research activities linked to our further economic and social development. At the same time, the Board undertook a major review of the role of health-related research in the creation of a knowledge-based society, in combating disease, in the promotion of health and in the delivery of more effective health services. This review was undertaken at the request of the Department of Health and Children with a view to putting in place a national strategy to support research for health. As the year closed, the Board was finalising a consultation document, *Making Knowledge Work for Health - Towards a Strategy for Research and Innovation for Health*, which it proposed to publish in hard copy and electronically on the website, inviting comment from the research community, those involved in the health services, the university sector, the healthcare industry and all those interested in the role of research in underpinning health. It is hoped in 2000 to present a definitive strategy document to the Department of Health and Children, based on the results of the consultative process.

The year 1999 marked the second full year of the Matching Funding Agreement with the Wellcome Trust that is providing an additional £6m for bio-medical research in Ireland between 1997-2000. There was a second call for applications for the prestigious 'New Blood' Fellowship awards. Under these awards, senior bio-medical researchers are offered permanent research positions in our universities, with the Wellcome Trust paying their full salary and generous start-up costs. After the third year of appointment, the salary costs of the Fellows are gradually assumed by the universities. It is hoped that following this year's call eight 'New Blood' Fellows will be appointed, representing an investment of over Stg £2m in bio-medical research and careers in this country. The scheme is designed to attract back to Ireland some of our best young researchers for whom limited career opportunities have been available up to now.

## Chief Executive's Report



The Matching Funding Agreement has also enabled the Board to introduce other forms of support, such as grants for research equipment, the North-South Co-Operative scheme, an Inter-Disciplinary Scheme, Fellowships in Health Services Research, and a co-funded scheme to support small research projects. The investment in researchers and research related to health facilitated by this Agreement is already building capacity and making a research career in Ireland more attractive.

Within the Board there was considerable reorganisation during the year. A new Division was established to respond to the growing allocation for competitive, peer-reviewed research funded by the Board. In February 1999, Dr Mairéad O'Driscoll was appointed as head of the Medical and Health Services Research Division. Dr O'Driscoll came to the Board with research expertise in bio-chemistry and experience of research management and policy with the Wellcome Trust and the Royal Society. The new Division quickly began to make an impact on the Board's procedures. The development of the Board's website facilitated much better communication between the new Division and the research community. The Board's grant regulations were updated and new regulations were issued in July. The Board's schemes of support have been more clearly organised around the fellowship programmes that support careers in research and project/programme support. At end of year, there was considerable satisfaction expressed by the research community with the improvement in the service provided to them by the Board.

The Report of the Commission on Nursing (1998) recommended much greater investment in nursing research to underpin the future development of the profession. With funding provided by the Department of Health and Children, the Board was pleased to initiate its first fellowship programme in nursing and midwifery

research. Ms Judith Chavasse joined the Board to advise on the development of the fellowship programme. The fellowships are designed to support nurses and midwives undertaking research at Masters or Ph.D. level on issues related to the clinical practice of their profession. Four fellowships were awarded in 1999.

The extent and causes of inequalities in health status are emerging as key issues in health policy in many countries. At the request of the Department of Health and Children, the Board made funding available during the year for a research unit to study these issues and recommend how such inequalities might be addressed. Following stiff competition, the funding for the unit was awarded to a team led by Professor Cecily Kelleher of University College Galway. The Board is also contributing to a European initiative on social variations in health co-ordinated by the European Science Foundation. Professor Kelleher is the Irish representative on the co-ordinating group.

A highlight of the year was the signing on 13th July of a major contract with the United States Institute of Child Health and Human Development for research on folic acid and the prevention of neural tube defects. The guest of honour at the signing ceremony was His Excellency Mr Michael Sullivan, United States Ambassador to Ireland. Dr Peadar Kirke, head of the Board's Child Health Epidemiology Division, is the principal investigator on the project in co-operation with a team in Trinity College led by Professor John Scott. The contract is worth £2.3m and is for three years' duration. The additional funding will provide for a major extension of research in the prevention of some of the most debilitating handicaps in children. The research has the support of the voluntary organisations representing people with spina bifida in Ireland and in Northern Ireland.

## Chief Executive's Report

Over the last few years, the Board and the Department of Health and Children have worked closely to develop a comprehensive database on the service needs of people with an intellectual disability. The information provided by the database was critical to the programme of funding for services for people with intellectual disabilities worth £35m announced by the Minister for Finance in the Budget.

The Fifth Framework Programme for Research and Development took effect in January 1999. The Board commissioned Dr Vivian O'Gorman, our former Chief Executive, to prepare a document to outline to the research community the opportunities provided by the new Programme. His report was published by the Board and posted on the Board's website. The Board also organised seminars in Cork and Dublin to highlight the Programme and to encourage Irish researchers to apply for funding. Through representation on programme committees, the Board is contributing to the successful implementation of the Programme and to shaping the research agenda at EU level.

We were sorry during the year to say goodbye to Ms Maureen O'Dwyer, who was personal assistant to the Chief Executive. Maureen was employed by the Board for almost 25 years and during that time made an enormous contribution to many aspects of the work of the Board. With her great organisational ability and knowledge of the HRB, she ensured a smooth transition during the change of Chief Executive. I would like to acknowledge her support to me in my first months in office and wish her continuing success in her new career.



*Prof. Michael B. Murphy, Dr. Andrew Robertson of The Wellcome Trust, and Dr. Ruth Barrington,*

# The Medical and Health Services Research Division



*Dr. Mairéad O'Driscoll, Pat Butler and Patricia Cranley*

The Medical and Health Services Research Division was formally established in 1999. The Division's objectives are to support health research by the provision of funding for projects, units and fellowships, to evaluate the effectiveness and increase awareness of research supported by the Board, and to support the strategic development of health research in the context of national and international developments. Dr Mairéad O'Driscoll was appointed Head of Division in March 1999.

Among the highlights of 1999 were the appointments of five 'New Blood' Fellowships through the Matching Funds Agreement with the Wellcome Trust and the introduction for the first time of Clinical Research Fellowships in Nursing and Midwifery. A new Research Unit in Health Status and Health Gain was awarded, focusing on health

inequalities in an Irish setting. The VHI and the HRB jointly funded a fellowship in health services research with a focus on health economics, and the HRB and the Northern Ireland Research and Development Office worked together to develop closer links between research teams across the island of Ireland. A list of research units, research projects and fellowships awarded by the board in 1999 is included in appendix C.

## Achievements in 1999

In 1999, the Board spent a record £4.6 million on providing funding support for health research in Ireland, an increase of £0.5 million over the previous year. The Board's grant regulations were updated for the first time in some years.

In February the Board approved the award of five Post-Doctoral Research Fellowships tenable at Irish universities and research institutes, and in March the award of five Clinical Research Training Fellowships was approved.

Also in March the 1999 Graves Medal, jointly sponsored with the Royal Academy of Medicine in Ireland, was presented to Professor Kingston Mills, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, for his lecture on 'New developments in paediatric vaccination through an understanding of immunity to infectious diseases'.

The Watts Medal for best summer student research project and presentation in 1998 was awarded by Professor William Watts to Mr. Christopher Greal, Department of Biochemistry, UCD, for his research on 'Investigation of interferon- $\gamma$  levels in newly-diagnosed patients with Type 1 (insulin-dependent) Diabetes Mellitus'. In May the Board approved the award of 45 Summer Student Scholarships for projects to be undertaken during the summer of 1999.

In June the Board also announced funding for 47 new research project grants in health and biomedical sciences. The total value of these grants is £2.2 million over three years. The grants were awarded to staff and students of six universities and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. The diversity of research topics, and the fact that 17 of the 47 grants were awarded to first-time applicants, demonstrate the continued strength and vibrancy of health and biomedical research in Ireland. The Board also approved eight Science Degree Scholarships.

## The Medical and Health Services Research Division

In July funding was announced for three new research grants under the Board's North-South co-operation scheme.

The Health Research Board and the Northern Ireland Research and Development Office worked closely in selecting these projects. From 2000 this scheme will be jointly managed and financed with the Northern Ireland Research and Development Office.

In September the Board approved the award of an Interdisciplinary Research Project to University College Dublin for research on 'novel bioengineering approaches to the study of muscle fatigue in sleep apnoea'. The VHI/HRB Health Services Research Fellowship was awarded to University College Cork to carry out a study

on 'estimating the need for GMS prescribing resources in Ireland'.

The Board continued to develop its support for Health Services Research by making six awards for co-funded health services research in October. These awards were jointly funded with the National Maternity Hospital, the Eastern Health Board, the Mid Western Health Board, the South Eastern Health Board and NUI, Galway. In addition, two Fellowships in Health Services Research were awarded and a new Research Unit on Health Status and Health Gain was established to carry out a five-year research programme on health status and inequalities. In November five 'New Blood' Fellowships were awarded by the Wellcome Trust as part of the final phase of the Wellcome Trust/HRB Matching Funds Agreement.

### 1999 AWARD SCHEMES

SCHEME	Number of Applications	Number of Awards
Project Grants - General	187	47
Project Grants - North-South Co-operation	22	3
Project Grants - Inter-Disciplinary	44	1
Project Grants - Co-funded in Health Services Research	23	6
Post Doctoral Fellowships	22	5
Clinical Research Training Fellowships	26	4
Fellowships in Health Services Research	12	2
Clinical Research Fellowships in Nursing and Midwifery	25	4
VHI/HRB Fellowship in Health Services Research	5	1
Science Degree Scholarships for Medical Graduates	8	4
Science Degree Scholarships for Medical Undergraduates	8	4
Research Equipment Grants	84	13
Summer Student Grants	78	45
Research Unit on Health Status and Health Gain	7	1
Total	551	140

## The Medical and Health Services Research Division



*Judith Chavasse, Dr. Ruth Barrington, Gerard Tobin, Mary McCarron, Peta Taaffe, Sinéad Hanafin and Patricia Leahy Warren at the launch of the Nursing Fellowships*

In December £0.5 million was awarded for research equipment in universities and hospitals to improve the infrastructure for health research in Ireland.

Also in December, funding for four new research fellowships in nursing and midwifery was announced. This was the first time that the Board had offered career support for nurses and midwives in research. The Board is very pleased to be involved in implementing the research recommendations of the Commission on Nursing.

During the year the HRB's website was developed as an interactive facility for the research community, with information about research funding and application forms available on-line.

### Looking Forward

The Government Estimates published at the end of 1999 indicate a major increase in the Health Research Board's

budget for 2000, providing the Board with the means to continue to address the deficiencies in Ireland's research infrastructure, and to expand its portfolio of awards.

The implementation during 2000 of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cancer Research agreed by the Ministers of Health of the Republic and Northern Ireland, and the US National Cancer Institutes, will enhance cancer research across the island.

Within the Division the first steps will be taken towards electronic processing of grant applications, and an evaluation of the Health Research Board's procedures for assessing grant applications is likely to lead to significant changes.

### Staff of the Division

Dr. Mairéad O'Driscoll Ph.D., Head of Division  
Pat Butler M.A.

Patricia Cranley B.A.

Judith Chavasse R.G.N., M.Phil.

# The Child Health Epidemiology Division



*Dr. Peadar Kirke*

The Child Health Epidemiology Division of the Health Research Board is involved in epidemiological research, mainly in the field of child health. The main focus of the current research programme of the Division is on neural tube defects and other congenital malformations.

## **Achievements in 1999**

A research contract valued at \$3 million was awarded to the Health Research Board, in conjunction with Trinity College, by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), a division of the United States National Institutes of Health. The contract funds a collaborative three-year study of the causes and prevention of neural tube defects, with special reference to the underlying genetic mechanisms. This award follows on the success of the research programme carried out by the same team under three previous contracts. The Principal Investigator is Dr. Peadar Kirke, the Head of the Child Health Epidemiology Division. Professor John Scott, Department of Biochemistry, Trinity College Dublin, and Dr. James Mills (NICHD) are co-Principal Investigators. Four new members of staff were appointed by the Health Research Board to carry out the additional work involved in extending the study, which will now include affected families in Northern Ireland.

The Division presented research papers to meetings of the International Epidemiological Association, the Welsh Congenital Abnormality Register and Information Service, the Faculty of Public Health Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, the Irish Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus, and the Cleft Lip and Palate Association of Ireland.

## The Child Health Epidemiology Division



### Publications during 1999

Shields DC, Kirke PN, Mills JL, Ramsbottom D, Molloy AM, Burke H, Weir DG, Scott JM, Whitehead AS. The 'thermolabile' variant of methylenetetrahydrofolate reductase and neural tube defects: an evaluation of genetic risk and the relative importance of the genotypes of the embryo and the mother. *American Journal of Human Genetics* 1999; 64: 1045-1055.

Mills JL, Kirke PN, Molloy AM, Burke H, Conley MR, Lee YJ, Mayne PD, Weir DG, Scott JM. Methylenetetrahydrofolate reductase thermolabile variant and oral clefts. *American Journal of Medical Genetics* 1999; 86: 71-4.

Brody LC, Baker PJ, Chines PS, Musick A, Molloy A M, Swanson DA, Kirke PN, Ghosh S, Scott JM, Mills JL. Methionine synthase: high-resolution mapping of the human gene and evaluation as a candidate locus for neural tube defects. *Molecular Genetics and Metabolism* 1999; 67: 324-333.

Daly SF, Molloy AM, Mills JL, Lee YJ, Conley M, Kirke PN, Weir DG, Scott JM. The influence of 5,10 methylenetetrahydrofolate reductase genotypes on enzyme activity in placental tissue. *British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology* 1999; 106: 1214-1218.

Whitehead AS, Molloy AM, Ramsbottom D, Weir DG, Kirke PN, Mills JL, Gallagher PM, Scott JM. Gene-gene interactions and neural tube defects. *Clinical Genetics* 1999; 55: 133-4.

Kirke PN, Switzer V. The epidemiology of the periconceptional use of folic acid in the Eastern Health Board. *Irish Journal of Medical Science* 1999; 168: 28.



Fitzpatrick P, Kirke PN, Daly L, Dinn E, Burke H, Bourke G, Masterson J. Predictors of first hip fracture in older women. *Irish Journal of Medical Science* 1999; 168: 85.

### Looking Forward

Continuing and extending the research on neural tube defects, the Division will set up a tracking database for the study, co-ordinate recruitment of subject families through liaison with the relevant associations in the Republic and in Northern Ireland, and make contact with public health nurses in the various community care areas throughout the country. Negotiations will continue with the Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus in England and Wales with a view to including their members in the NTD research programme.

Analysis of information on survival and handicap gathered from all women who gave birth to babies with neural tube defects in the three main Dublin maternity hospitals during the period 1976-1987 will proceed during 2000.

## *The Child Health Epidemiology Division*

The coming year will see the commencement of the genetic study of orofacial clefts, also funded by the NICHD. The Child Health Epidemiology Division will set up a tracking database, liaise with the Cleft Lip and Palate Association of Ireland in pilot testing the study questionnaire and in recruiting study participants, and assess the feasibility of recruitment through hospitals.

### **Staff of the Division**

Dr. Peadar Kirke M.B., FFPH.M.I., FFPH.M., M.Sc.,

D.C.H., D.Obst., Head of the Division

Dr. Mary Patricia McKeever Ph.D.

Marie Sutton M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., M.P.H.

Miriam Lynch R.G.N., M.Psych.Sc.

Sharon Murray R.G.N., R.M.

Helen Burke B.Soc.Sc.

Deborah Watson B.Sc.



*Michael J. Sullivan, American Ambassador to Ireland, Dr. Ruth Barrington and Brian Cowen, Minister for Health and Children*

# The Disability Databases Division



*Fiona Mulvany and Pamela Gallagher*

The Disability Databases Division is contracted to manage two national service-planning databases on behalf of the Disability Services Section of the Department of Health and Children. The National Intellectual Disability Databases, established in 1995, provides a comprehensive information base for effective planning, funding, and management of services for people with intellectual disability. The development of a similar database for people with physical and sensory disabilities is currently being co-ordinated by this Division.

## **The National Intellectual Disability Database**

The Division is responsible for the ongoing management and development of the National Intellectual Disability Databases.

During the year a statistical summary of the 1998 data was prepared for the Department of Health and Children, and 1999 data received from health boards was imported and validated.

The report of the National Clinical Evaluation of the Intellectual Disability Databases was completed and presented to the National Intellectual Disability Database Committee in the Spring. In response to requests from the Health Boards and service providers for a more user-friendly database software package, the Division was involved in overseeing the ongoing development of new software.

The availability of national data was a key factor influencing the Government's decision to allocate additional funding of £35 million in the budget in December 1999 for the development of intellectual disability services, together with a commitment to clear the waiting lists for services within a three-year period.

As part of the Division's role in raising awareness of the disability databases, presentations were made in February 1999 to the council meeting of the National Association for the Mentally Handicapped of Ireland and in October 1999 to the annual parents' seminar.

## *The Disability Databases Division*

### **The National Physical and Sensory Disability Database**

At the request of the Department of Health and Children, the Division undertook the role of co-ordinating the development of the National Physical and Sensory Disability Database. By the end of 1999 a Research Analyst dedicated to the National Physical and Sensory Disability Database was recruited.

Progress was made in the development of data content and following extensive consultation the criteria for database inclusion/removal were finalised. By the end of 1999 the first issue of a newsletter which documents the development of the database was published and disseminated.

### **Looking Forward**

The Division is preparing for publication two Annual Reports from the National Intellectual Disability Database, for 1998/1999 (combined) and 2000. It will devise and conduct national training programmes for the National Intellectual Disability Database.

Continuing the development of new software, the establishment and co-ordination by the Division of a Software Management Group for the National Intellectual Disability Database will provide a forum for future developments. The Division looks forward to assisting

the Department of Health and Children in monitoring the implementation of the investment programme for intellectual disability services.

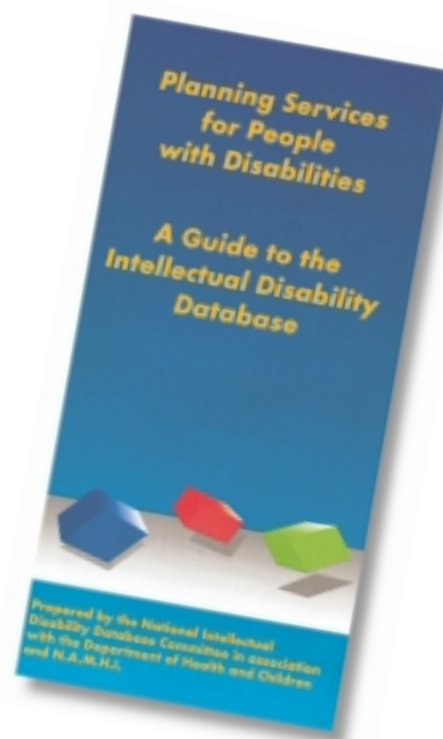
In the coming year data content, protocols, and guidelines will be finalised for the National Physical and Sensory Disability Database, and a pilot implementation conducted and evaluated.

### **Staff of the Division**

Fiona Mulvany B.Soc.Sc., P.Grad.Dip.(Statistics),

Head of the Division

Dr. Pamela Gallagher Ph.D., P.Grad.Dip.(Statistics).



# The Drug Misuse Research Division



*Lucy Dillon, Mary O' Brien, Eimear Farrell, Paul Cahill, Tracy Kelleher, and Ros Moran*

The Drug Misuse Research Division is a national centre for research on drug misuse issues in Ireland. It carries out research that informs policy and contributes to academic understanding of drug misuse. The Division maintains the National Drug Treatment Reporting System (NDTRS) as the main national epidemiological database on treated drug misuse in Ireland. The Division is the

designated Irish National Focal Point of the REITOX network convened by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA).

As the National Focal Point, the Division co-operates with other centres across the EU in developing standardized drug-related information and disseminating such data.

## Achievements in 1999

Under its contractual obligations with the EMCDDA the Division prepared a National Report on the drug situation in Ireland and a report on joint action on new synthetic drugs. It developed a database on demand reduction projects, as well as undertaking EU harmonisation work in relation to five key indicators of drug misuse.

The Division won three additional EMCDDA contracts to undertake further research work on the European Demand Reduction Database, a demand reduction networking project, and a literature review and annotated bibliography on the relation between drug use, impaired driving and traffic accidents.

Work continued on a Council of Europe, Pompidou Group, report on drug use among prisoners. Research work was completed and reports published on contracts awarded by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform on drug use among prisoners, and on the availability, use and evaluation of the provision of crèche facilities in association with drug-treatment services. On foot of the research results from the crèche study the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, when launching the report, announced the allocation of funding for training of crèche workers in drug-treatment services.

## The Drug Misuse Research Division

The first issue of the *DrugNet Ireland* Newsletter was launched in October 1999. This newsletter, incorporating Irish and EU-wide material, is an important resource for policy makers, professionals and the general public interested in the drugs area in Ireland.

The following research study start-ups took place: research into the mobile drug clinic, drug misuse in rural areas, and trends in drug misuse. In collaboration with Dr. Alan Kelly and Dr. Hamish Sinclair, Department of Community Medicine, Trinity College Dublin, work commenced on the application of geographic information systems to NDTRS data.

Staff from the division presented papers to the Interim Advisory Committee on Drugs, Managers of Irish Prisons and the Interim Prison Authority, An Garda Síochána, Northern Region / Oisín Programme Conference, the Annual Conference of the Psychological Society of Ireland, the Regional Drug Co-ordinators meeting in Dublin and the European Summer School on Comparative Social Research on Drugs and Drug Policy, Aarhus, Denmark. In addition, staff from the Division attended a number of other conferences and prepared a submission to the Coroner Review Group on drug-related deaths. In August the Division convened two national expert group meetings on drug-related deaths and on drug treatment demand.

During the year the Division had input into masters degree courses at both Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin. The Head of the Division, Ms. Rosalyn Moran, was elected first chairperson of the EU REITOX group.

### Publications

Arnhof, Y., Bergman, N., Althen, T., Nilsson, M., Haas, S., Knaack, F., Kuipers, H., Morales, L.R. and O'Brien, M. (1999) *Demand Reduction Networking in Austria, Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden*. Stockholm: EMCDDA and National Institute of Public Health.

Crowley, J., and Courtney, R. (1999). The relation between drug use, impaired driving and traffic accidents. The results of an investigation carried out for the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) Lisbon. In : *Road Traffic and Drugs*. Seminar organised by the Co-operation Group to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Drugs (Pompidou Group). Strasbourg, 19-21 April 1999. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.



John O'Donoghue, Minister for Justice, and Prof Michael Murphy

## The Drug Misuse Research Division



Duff, P. (1999). *Treated Drug Users in 23 European Cities, Data 1997, Trends 1996-97*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.

Duff, P., Moran, R. and O'Brien, M. (1999). The Feasibility of the Inclusion of General Practitioners and Prisons in the NDTRS. February 1999. Health Research Board Internal Report.

Gemmell, C., Moran, R., Crowley, J., and Courtney, R. (1999). *Literature review on the relation between drug use, impaired driving and traffic accidents*. Lisbon: EMCDDA.

Gemmell, C., Moran, R., Crowley, J., and Courtney, R. (1999). *An inventory of literature on the relation between drug use, impaired driving and traffic accidents*. Lisbon: EMCDDA.

Moran, R. (1999). *The availability, use and evaluation of the provision of crèche facilities in association with drug treatment* (ISBN 0-9517193-6-X). Dublin: Drug Misuse Research Division, The Health Research Board.

O'Brien, M., and Moran, R. (1999). *Overview of drug issues in Ireland: A resource document* (ISBN 0 9517193 4 3). Dublin: Drug Misuse Research Division, The Health Research Board.

O'Brien, M. et al. (1999). *National Drug Treatment Reporting System: Statistical Bulletin 1997 and 1998*. Dublin: Drug Misuse Research Division, The Health Research Board.

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### Looking Forward

A number of the research studies presently underway will be published in the coming year. Other publications planned by the Division include a book of readings and further editions of *DrugNet Ireland*. The Division plans to develop research proposals in the national and EU context and to start some new research projects. Work will continue on expanding the NDTRS into the prison services and it is hoped to include data from the prisons with future epidemiological data published. It is planned to establish a documentation database at the Drug Misuse Research Division. The Division looks forward to increased co-operation with drug services and researchers in Northern Ireland.

### Staff of the Division

Rosalyn Moran M.A., M.Sc., H.D.E., Head of the Division  
 Mary O'Brien B.A., Dip.Stat., H.Dip.Soc. & Soc.Res.  
 Lucy Dillon B.A.  
 Eimear Farrell B.A., M.Sc.  
 Tracy Kelleher B.A., H.Dip. (Rural Development)  
 Helena Campbell B.A.  
 Dora Daly



# The Mental Health Research Division



*Antoinette Daly and Dr. Dermot Walsh*

The Mental Health Research Division maintains and extends health information systems in the mental health field and initiates and supports research in the field of psychiatry and related sciences. It does this by co-ordinating the collection of epidemiological, genetic and health services data, providing a quality analysis and information service to a range of professionals, and assisting the continued development of a range of research activities in the field of mental health.

## **National Psychiatric In-Patient Reporting System**

As a function of its administration of the national psychiatric inpatient database, the Division published its comprehensive analysis of data on the mental health services, *Activities of Irish Psychiatric Services 1997*, continuing the series of reports dating from 1965. These reports are invaluable to those planning and evaluating mental health service initiatives. To facilitate the submission of fully computerised returns by all hospitals and units participating in the National Psychiatric In-Patient Reporting System, a new computer programme was devised and will be pilot-tested in 2000.

## **The Westmeath and Roscommon Psychiatric Case Register**

The database for the Westmeath and Roscommon Case Register was updated to a customised programme, which has been tested and is now in operation. Analysis of the data recorded by this register is under way and results will be made available for comparison with the findings of a similarly operated case register in the catchment area of St Loman's Hospital, Dublin. Both registers have served as valuable data sources or case identifiers for our schizophrenia and alcohol studies.

## **The Genetic Epidemiology of Schizophrenia in Ireland**

This study, which started in 1993 and is proceeding in collaboration with Virginia Commonwealth University, was awarded funding of £2.3 million for a further three-year period by the United States National Institute of Mental Health. Research teams have been recruited and fieldwork commenced in the Eastern, Southern and Western Health Board areas. In addition, close contact is maintained with a team in Northern Ireland engaged in a similar study.



## The Mental Health Research Division



Denise Hanlon and Margaret Devitt

### The Irish Affected Sib-Pair Study of Alcohol Dependence

This project, which is also being carried out in collaboration with the Virginia Commonwealth University, and is funded through the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism in the United States, is into its third year of field work. Research workers are carrying out fieldwork in the Eastern, Southern, Mid Western and Western Health Board areas. Similar investigations, using the same methodologies, are being carried out by a team in Northern Ireland.

### A Study of the Availability and Use of Acute Psychiatric Beds in the Eastern Health Board Region

A report entitled "We have no beds..." was published in early 1999. The study found that 43% of acute psychiatric beds were occupied by patients who were not suffering from acute illness but who required rehabilitation facilities which, in many cases, were not available. The policy implications of these findings led to the appointment of a specialist rehabilitation team in the Eastern Regional Health Authority.

### Other Projects

The results of Irish participation in a World Health Organisation 15-year follow-up study of schizophrenic patients are being written up. A study entitled *Mortality in Irish Psychiatric In-patients* was completed and published in 1999. A study on depression and suicide over a 21-year period in two case register areas is being carried out and will be published in 2000. A review of the national pattern of admissions and discharges as recorded by the NPIRS over a 34-year period has commenced.

### Looking Forward

The Division aims to achieve fully computerised reporting by all hospitals and units contributing to its database records. The 1998 data is being compiled and will be published in *Activities of Irish Psychiatric Services 1998*.

Reports on several of the studies already carried out will be compiled for publication.

These include the results of:

- Irish participation in a 15-year follow-up of schizophrenic patients,
- Findings of a study on depression and suicide over a 21-year period in two case register areas,
- A study on the pattern of admissions and discharges in Irish psychiatric hospitals and units over a 34-year period,
- Analysis and publication of the findings of a national survey of psychiatric morbidity in the general population in Ireland,
- A study of the unmet needs of severely ill patients in one Irish psychiatric service.

## The Mental Health Research Division

As a further step in a series of investigations of health service provision in the mental health field, proposals for a study of the availability and use of day hospital and day centre places in two representative health boards were examined and field work will begin in 2000. The project will last two years and will follow, broadly, the strategy of the in-patient study. It is also planned to carry out an investigation into teenage admissions to Irish psychiatric hospitals and units.

Preparations will be made for the Census of Irish Psychiatric Hospitals and Units 2001, which will take place in March 2001 as part of a series carried out at 10-year intervals since 1965.

### Staff of the Division

Dr. Dermot Walsh, F.R.C.P.I., Head of Division

Dr. Ciaran Browne Ph.D., Dip.Stats.

Antoinette Daly M.A., Dip.Stats.

Annette Duffy B.Soc.Sc.

Lorraine Caprani

Deirdre Hallissey

Yvonne Dunne

Joan Moore B.A.

Nessa Burke B.A., M.Psych.Sc.

Grace Walker

Aine Finnerty B.A.

Margaret Devitt R.G.N., R.M., B.Sc.

Denise Hanlon Dip A.I. and D.

Philomena Gavigan M.A.



Monica Banks and Dr. Marina Somers

On secondment to the Health Research Board:

Brian O'Malley R.P.N., Western Health Board

Paula Byrne R.P.N., Western Health Board

Eileen Murphy R.P.N., Southern Health Board

Richard Deady R.P.N., Southern Health Board

Deirdre King S.R.N., Mid Western Health Board

Monica Banks R.P.N., Eastern Health Board

# The Finance and Administration Division



*Ashling Dwyer and Yvonne Russell*

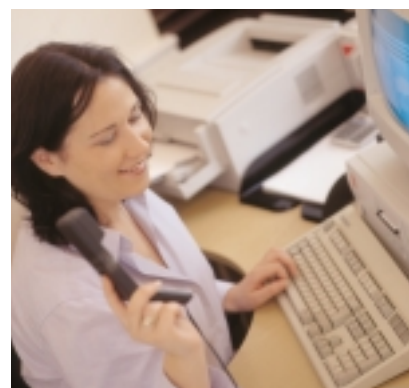
The role of the Finance and Administration Division is to support the Board and the Chief Executive in the implementation of the Board's policies and decisions, and to facilitate the work of the Board's staff.

## Staffing and Personnel

At the end of 1999 the Health Research Board had 49 staff members, including many highly qualified and experienced scientific and social researchers engaged directly in research. The staff complement was augmented during 1999 to reflect the increased funding received by the Board from the Department of Health and Children and from American and European sources.

In July Ms Maureen O'Dwyer retired after 27 years' service with the Board and its predecessor organisation, the Medico-Social Research Board. Ms Sarah Lynch was appointed as personal assistant to the Chief Executive. Dr Mairéad O'Driscoll was appointed Head of the Medical and Health Services Research Division in March 1999. In addition, research teams and support staff were recruited to the Drug Misuse Research Division, the Disability Database Division, the Child Health Epidemiology Division, and the Mental Health Research Division. The Finance and Administration Division welcomed Ms Ashling Dwyer, Trainee Accountant, Mr David Flood, Maintenance, and Ms Karen O'Donnell, Receptionist/Administrator.

The Board is committed to attracting and retaining the best staff, and to providing them with the means to realise their full potential. It encourages staff to avail of third level, post-graduate, or equivalent courses considered to be of value to them in their work and in their personal development. All staff took part in courses relating to health and safety in 1999.



*Karen O'Donnell*

## The Finance and Administration Division

### Finance

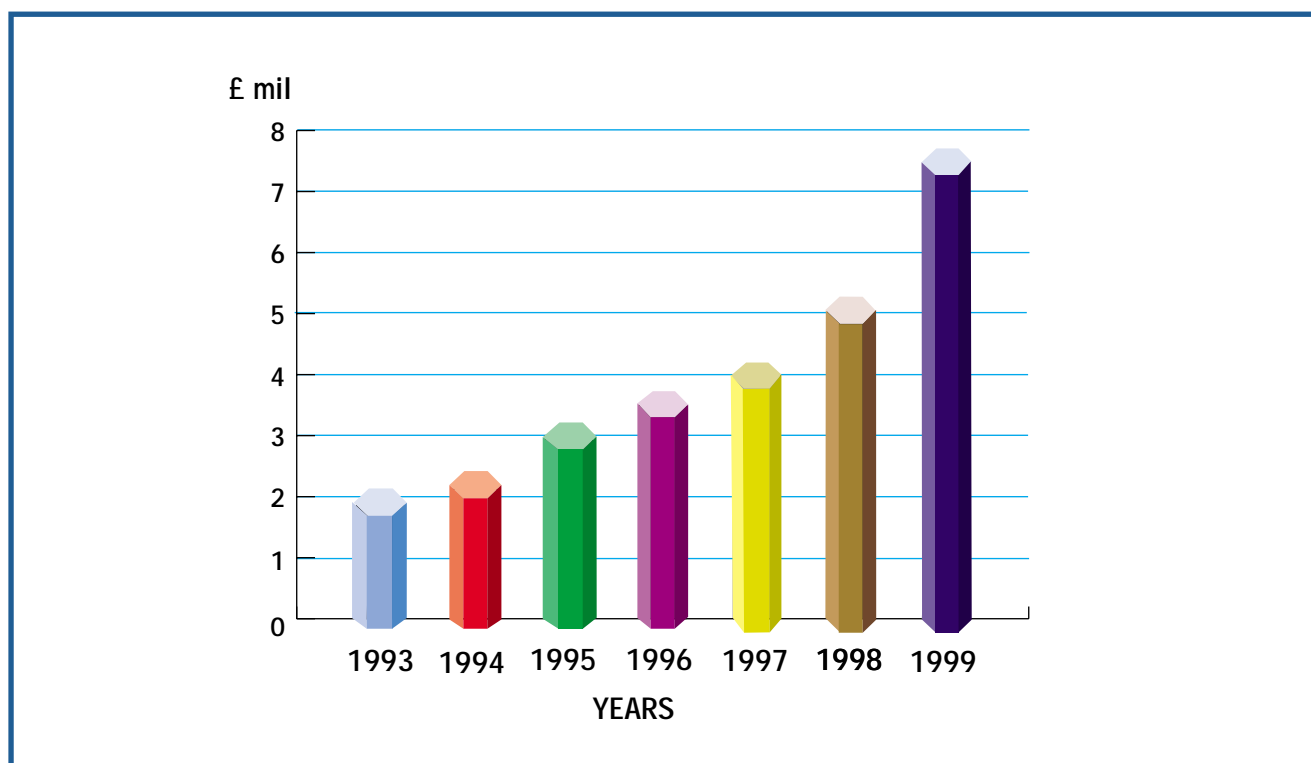
Total income for the year amounted to £6,403,181. This figure is inclusive of £627,000 capital funding received from the Department of Health and Children, which was used to fund research equipment grants and essential improvements to the Board's Baggot Street premises. Total expenditure on research grants and fellowships increased by 10% in 1999, to £4,553,022, with discipline integration grants and nursing and midwifery research receiving funding for the first time. Recently-signed research contracts from the National Institutes of Child Health and Human Development (USA), and Virginia Commonwealth University (USA), are reflected in increased external research funding and expenditure in the Child Health Epidemiology Division and the Mental Health Research Division. The result for the year was a deficit of £68,165 and the Board's accumulated

revenue reserves at the end of 1999 amounted to £38,152. The assistance of the finance offices of the recipient research institutions in the administration of the Board's award schemes is gratefully appreciated.

### Buildings, Facilities, and Information Technology

Further structural work was undertaken as part of a continuing project to enhance and enlarge office and meeting facilities at the Board's Baggot Street premises. Major changes to the Board's computer hardware and software packages were implemented to ensure Year-2000 compliance. All databases were reviewed and amended as appropriate, and an upgraded Euro-compliant and Year-2000 compliant finance package was installed. Amendments and upgrades to computer software were accompanied by training courses for staff.

Fig. 1 Research Expenditure 1993-1999



## The Finance and Administration Division



### Looking Forward

Throughout 2000 the Finance and Administration Division will continue the process of streamlining the payment of research awards with the objective of establishing procedures that will enable the Board to increase its research funding activities without increasing the associated administration costs.

The production of a comprehensive human resource policy document will proceed during 2000 and will make a significant contribution in effecting many changes throughout the organisation and will enhance the services provided.

Continuous improvement of the Health Research Board website has greatly facilitated communication between the Board, the research community and the general public. The development of an Intranet will provide a similar facility for internal communication for the Board's staff and those providing the Board with research information.



Leo Johnson

### Staff of the Division

Carol Cronin B.Comm., F.C.A., Secretary to the Board,

Head of the Division

Yvonne Russell

Ashling Dwyer

Karen O'Donnell B.Sc.

Leo Johnson

David Flood

Sarah Lynch, P.A. to the Chief Executive

# Statement of Board Members' Responsibilities

The Board is required by the Health Research Board (Establishment) Order, 1986, to prepare Financial Statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Health Research Board and of its income and expenditure for that period. In preparing those Financial Statements the Board is required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the Financial Statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Health Research Board will continue in operation.

The Board is responsible for keeping proper books of accounts which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Health Research Board and enable it to ensure that the Financial Statements comply with the Order. It is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Health Research Board and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

On behalf of the Board:

Professor Michael B. Murphy  
**Chairman**

Edward Rowland  
**Board Member**

Date: 15th November 2000

# Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General

I have audited the financial statements on pages 28 to 36.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD AND OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL

The accounting responsibilities of the members of the Board are set out in the Statement of Board Members' Responsibilities on page 26. It is my responsibility under Section 5 of the Comptroller and Auditor General (Amendment) Act, 1993, to audit the financial statements presented to me by the Board and to report on them. As the result of my audit I form an independent opinion on the financial statements.

## BASIS OF OPINION

In the exercise of my function as Comptroller and Auditor General I plan and perform my audit in a way which takes account of the special considerations in relation to management and operations which attach to bodies in receipt of substantial funding from the State.

An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made in the preparation of the financial statements and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

My audit was conducted in accordance with auditing standards which embrace the standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board and in order to provide sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. I obtained all the information and explanations that I required to enable me to fulfil my function as Comptroller and Auditor General and, in forming my opinion, I also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

## OPINION

In my opinion proper books of account have been kept by the Board and the financial statements, which are in agreement with them, give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the Board at 31 December 1999 and of its income and expenditure and cash flow for the year then ended.

John Purcell

**Comptroller and Auditor General**

4 December 2000

# Statement of Accounting Policies

The Financial Statements are prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

## INCOME RECOGNITION

The Department of Health and Children's Revenue Grant is credited to the income and expenditure account in full in the year in which it is allocated. Capital Grants are accounted for on an accruals basis. All other research funding is recognised as income when it is used to offset matching expenditure. Such funding includes a contribution towards the administration costs of the Board.

## EXPENDITURE RECOGNITION

Funding for research awards is recognised as expenditure in the period in which it is scheduled for payment to the award holder. All other expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis.

## TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. The charge for depreciation is calculated to write down the cost of the tangible fixed assets to their estimated residual values by annual instalments over their expected useful lives on the following basis:

Premises	4%
Office Furniture and Equipment	15%
Computer Equipment	25%

Tangible fixed assets costing less than IR£500 are not capitalised.

## DEBTORS

Known bad debts are written off and specific provision is made for any amounts the collection of which is considered doubtful.

## PENSIONS

Two employees of the Board are members of a fully funded defined benefit pension scheme, which is funded by contributions from the Board. The fund is vested in independent trustees nominated by the Board, for the sole benefit of the employees and their dependants. The adequacy of the fund to meet pension liabilities is periodically assessed by an independent qualified actuary. The most recent actuarial valuation, which was carried out on 1st May 1996, showed the scheme to be in surplus and for this reason the Board is not currently making contributions to the fund.

All other permanent staff are members of the Local Government Superannuation Scheme. Pensions arising under this scheme are paid out of current funds as they arise, and pension contributions deducted from staff are netted against pension payments as shown in note 5. No provision has been made in the accounts in respect of accrued superannuation benefits payable in future years.

# Prompt Payment of Accounts Act, 1997

Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General pursuant to Section 13 of the Prompt Payment of Accounts Act, 1997

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD AND OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL

The Board is obliged to comply with the Act and, in particular, is required to

- pay its suppliers within the payment periods specified in the Act
- if payment to a supplier is late, include the appropriate penalty interest with the payment together with the information required by Section 6
- disclose the Board's payment practices in the period in the appropriate way.

Under Section 13 of the Act, it is my responsibility, as Auditor of the Board, to report on whether, in all material respects, the Board has complied with the provisions of the Act.

## BASIS OF OPINION

My examination included a review of the payment systems and procedures in place and checking, on a test basis, evidence relating to the operation of the Act by the Board during the year.

I obtained all the information and explanations which I considered necessary for the exercise of my function under Section 13 of the Act.

## OPINION

As a result of my examination, it is my opinion that the Board complied in all material respects with the provisions of the Act during the year ended 31 December 1999.

John Purcell  
Comptroller and Auditor General

4 December 2000

## *Prompt Payment of Accounts Act, 1997*



The Prompt Payments of Accounts Act 1997 (the Act) came into operation on 2 January 1998. The Health Research Board comes under the remit of the Act. The payment practices of the Health Research Board are reported on below for the year ended 31 December 1999, in accordance with section 12 of the Act.

It is the policy of the Health Research Board to ensure that all accounts are paid promptly. Cheques are issued as required to ensure timely payments.

The system of internal control incorporates such controls and procedures as are considered necessary to ensure compliance with the Act. The Health Research Board's system of internal control includes accounting and computer controls designed to ensure the identification of invoices and contracts for payment within the prescribed payment dates defined by the Act. These controls are designed to provide reasonable, and not absolute, assurances against material non-compliance with the Act.

There were no late payments during 1999 and accordingly no interest was paid in the year.

There have been no material developments since 1 January 2000.

Carol Cronin

**Secretary**

15th November 2000

# Appendix A

## Research Sub-Committees

### Cardiovascular Diseases

Professor M. Murphy (Chair), Dr K. Daly, Professor I. Graham, Dr A. Keenan, Professor A. Johnson, Dr A. Allshire, Professor J. Docherty, Dr T. Kinsella, Dr A.P. Maxwell, Professor D. Lyons, Dr D. Kenny

### Dental Sciences

Dr H. Whelton (Chair), Dr V.R. O'Sullivan, Professor D. O'Mullane, Dr S. Flint, Dr M. Kinerons, Dr D. McCarthy, Dr F. Houston, Dr D. Burden, Dr M. Gavin, Professor R. McConnell

### Gastroenterology

Professor D. Weir (Chair), Dr A. Baird, Professor J.K. Collins, Dr C. Farrelly, Professor F. Shanahan, Professor B. Drumm, Dr D. O'Donoghue, Mr O. McAnena, Professor P. Redmond, Dr F. Murray

### Genetics

Professor D. Fitzgerald (Chair), Dr D. Croke, Dr T. McCarthy, Dr D. Barton, Professor N. Nevin, Dr M. Gill, Dr T. Ryan, Professor A. Green, Dr M. Lawler, Dr S. Martin

### Health Services Research

Ms A. Cleary (Chair), Dr M. Wiley, Dr M. Boland, Mr D. Doherty, Dr J. Sheehan, Dr A. Kelly, Professor I. Perry, Dr S. Porter, Professor P. O'Connor, Dr S. O'Connor, Professor H. McGee, Dr E. Connolly

### Immunology and Pathology

Professor H. Brady (Chair), Professor T. Cotter, Professor P. Dervan, Dr K. Mills, Dr S. Kennedy, Professor P.G. Toner, Dr J. Jackson, Dr N. Moran, Dr P. Newsholme

### Metabolism and Endocrinology

Professor J. Feely (Chair), Professor T.J. McKenna, Professor P. Collins, Professor J.P. Gosling, Dr L. O'Neill, Dr B. Buckley, Dr D. O'Halloran, Dr C. Thompson, Dr J. Nolan

### Microbiology and Virology

Professor H. Brady (Chair), Dr B. Cryan, Dr L. Fenelon, Professor C. Keane, Dr E. Smyth, Dr A. Moran, Dr G. Corbett-Feeney, Professor C. Dorman, Professor W. Hall, Professor H. Humphreys

### Molecular and Cell Biology

Professor D. Fitzgerald (Chair), Dr D. Kelleher, Professor B. Harvey, Dr D. Walls, Dr G. Butler, Dr F. Martin, Professor B. Walker, Dr C. Daly, Dr D. O'Connell, Dr C. Godson

### Neurosciences and Mental Health

Professor R. Anwyl, Dr A. Carney, Dr M. Hutchinson, Professor C. Regan, Professor K. Tipton, Dr K. McDermott, Professor R.J. McClelland, Dr E. O'Callaghan, Professor T. Dinan

### Oncology and Haematology

Professor P. Johnston (Chair), Professor S. McCann, Dr D. McCarthy, Professor D. Hollywood, Dr G. Murphy, Mr G.C. O'Sullivan, Professor E. Egan, Professor P. Daly, Dr E. Kay

### Public Health and General Practice

Professor T. O'Dowd (Chair), Professor L. Daly, Professor G. Bury, Dr S. Allwright, Dr S. Denyer, Professor B. Herity, Dr C. Hayes, Professor I. Perry, Professor A. Murphy, Dr A. Gavin

### Reproductive Medicine

Professor B. Herity (Chair), Dr J. Carroll, Professor M. Kane, Professor C. O'Herlihy, Professor N. Nevin, Professor B. Sheppard, Dr E. Griffin, Dr L. Drudy, Dr P. Dockery, Dr D. Egan

### Respiratory Diseases

Professor P. McCarthy (Chair), Professor M.X. Fitzgerald, Dr C.P. Bredin, Dr J.J. Gilmartin, Dr C. O'Connor, Professor M. Ryan, Dr J. Power, Dr N.G. McElvaney, Dr E. Mulloy

# Appendix B

## Representation on National and International Committees

**European Science Foundation (ESF)**  
**European Medical Research Council (EMRC)**  
 Dr. Ruth Barrington

**Programme Committee**  
**EU Fifth Framework Programme**  
 - Improving the Human Research Potential and the  
 Socio-Economic Knowledge Base  
 Dr. Ruth Barrington

**Cost Ad Hoc Committee on Medicine and Health**  
 Dr. Ruth Barrington

**National Early Warning System on New Synthetic Drugs  
 Group**  
 Ms. Rosalyn Moran  
 Ms. Mary O'Brien

**Head of REITOX Focal Point**  
**European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addition  
 (Lisbon)**  
 Ms. Rosalyn Moran

**Council of Europe (Pompidou Group)**  
 Ms. Mary O'Brien

**EUROCAT (European Registration of Congenital Anomalies)**  
**Working Group on Research**  
 Dr. Peadar Kirke

**Steering Group of European Science Foundation Network on  
 Orofacial Clefts**  
 Dr. Peadar Kirke

**Co-operation to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in  
 Drugs (Pompidou Group)**  
 - Drug Use in Prison  
 Ms Lucy Dillon

# Appendix C

## Research Grants, Scholarships and Fellowships Awarded in 1999

### 1. General Research Project Grants

Grantholder	Sub-Committee	Institution	Project
Dr Dermot Cox	Cardiovascular Diseases	Department of Clinical Pharmacology Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland 123 St. Stephen's Green Dublin 2	NGR- A novel fibrinogen binding site or αIIbB3
Dr Ann McGinty	Cardiovascular Diseases	Department of Medicine & Therapeutics Mater Hospital / UCD 41 Eccles Street Dublin 7	An investigation into the potential immuno-modulatory role of cyclooxygenase II
Dr Stuart J. Bund	Cardiovascular Diseases	Department of Human Anatomy & Physiology University College Dublin Earlsfort Terrace Dublin 2	Vascular structure and myogenic tone as the combined background for resistance artery contraction in hypertension
Professor David Coleman	Dental Sciences	Dept. of Oral Surgery, Oral Medicine & Oral Pathology School of Dental Science / Dublin Dental Hospital Trinity College Dublin 2	An investigation of the mechanisms of azole antifungal drug resistance in <i>Candida dubliniensis</i>
Professor Keith Tipton and Dr. O'Sullivan	Dental Sciences	Department of Biochemistry Trinity College Dublin 2	Semicarbazide sensitive amine oxidase in murine and human dental pulp and the effects of oxidative stress on murine odontoblasts
Dr Lynda Fenelon and Dr. O'Farrelly	Dental Sciences	Education & Research Centre St. Vincent's University Hospital / UCD Elm Park Dublin 4	<i>Streptococcus Mutans</i> adherence to hydroxyapatite beads and its prevention
Dr Alan Baird	Gastroenterology	Department of Pharmacology University College Dublin Belfield Dublin 4	Nuclear Factor κB - a rational target for inflammatory bowel disease therapy?
Dr James FX Jones	Gastroenterology	Department of Human Anatomy & Physiology University College Dublin Earlsfort Terrace Dublin 2	Central control of the crural diaphragm
Professor Fergus Shanahan et al.	Gastroenterology	Department of Medicine NUI, University College Cork Cork University Hospital Cork	Multiple gene array analysis of the inflammation-dysplasia-cancer sequence in inflammatory bowel disease

# Appendix C

Grantholder	Sub-Committee	Institution	Project
Dr David Croke and Dr Mayne	Genetics	Department of Biochemistry Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland 123 St. Stephen's Green Dublin 2	Development of a haplotyping system for the human Galactose-1-phosphate Uridyltransferase locus and mutation-haplotype correlations in transferase-deficient galactosaemia
Dr Gwyneth J. Farrar et al.	Genetics	Smurfit Institute of Genetics Genetics Department Trinity College Dublin 2	Mutation-independent therapeutic approaches for dominantly inherited brittle bone disorders
Dr Finbarr O'Sullivan	Health Services Research	Statistical Laboratory Department of Statistics University College Cork	Statistical segmentation methods for small area estimation problems in epidemiology and public health
Dr Sheelagh O'Brien Dr. McMahon	Health Services Research	Occupational Health Department St. Vincent's University Hospital, Elm Park Dublin 4	Prevention of needlestick injuries and hospital intervention trial
Dr Geraldine Moane	Health Services Research	Department of Psychology University College Dublin Belfield Dublin 4	The measurement of treatment effects on denial in a sample of sex offenders, using the ICD (Inventory of Cognitive Distortion)
Dr Marie Laffoy	Health Services Research	Public Health Department Eastern Health Board	Equity of access to liver transplantation in Ireland
Dr Aileen Long	Immunology & Pathology	Department of Biochemistry Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland 123 St. Stephen's Green Dublin 2	Interaction of PKC $\theta$ and the cytoskeleton in signalling through T cell surface molecules
Dr Derek Doherty	Immunology & Pathology	Education & Research Centre and Liver Unit St. Vincent's University Hospital Elm Park, Dublin 4	Characterisation of CD1-restricted T cells in the human liver
Dr John J. O'Leary and Ms. Ring	Immunology & Pathology	Department of Pathology Coombe Women's Hospital, Dublin 8	Cdc 6, Mcm5, qFish telomerase/telomeric repeat assay and HPV status as prognostic markers in cervical screening
Dr Luke O'Neill	Immunology & Pathology	Department of Biochemistry Trinity College Dublin 2	Cloning and characterisation of A46R and A52R, two novel viral members of the interleukin-1 / Toll receptor family
Dr Philip Newsholme and Dr Nolan	Metabolism & Endocrinology	Department of Biochemistry University College Dublin Belfield Dublin 4	Determination of the role of complement-fixing autoantibodies and activated complement in the B-cell dysfunctional and destructive phase of Type-1 diabetes mellitus

# Appendix C

Grantholder	Sub-Committee	Institution	Project
Dr Christopher Thompson	Metabolism & Endocrinology	Department of Endocrinology Beaumont Hospital Beaumont Road Dublin 9	Metabolic factors controlling Aquaporin-2 expression
Dr Angus Bell	Microbiology & Virology	Department of Microbiology Moynes Institute Trinity College Dublin 2	FK506-binding proteins (FKBPs) - roles in malarial pathogenesis and antimalarial drug action
Professor Gregory J. Atkins	Microbiology & Virology	Department of Microbiology Moynes Institute of Preventive Medicine Trinity College Dublin 2	Destruction of pathogenic cells using Semliki forest virus vector
Dr Wim Meijer	Microbiology & Virology	Department of Industrial Microbiology University College Dublin Belfield Dublin 4	Fuelling intracellular pathogenic bacteria: The role of lactate metabolism of <i>Rhodococcus Equi</i> in growth and survival within macrophages
Professor Cyril J. Smyth	Microbiology & Virology	Department of Microbiology Moynes Institute of Preventive Medicine Trinity College Dublin 2	Genetic diversity of <i>Helicobacter Pylori</i> isolates through microevolution Vivo
Dr Desiree Bennett	Microbiology and Virology	National Meningococcal Reference Laboratory Temple Street Hospital Dublin 1	Investigation of bacteraemic and meningeal infection caused by <i>Streptococcus Pneumoniae</i> in the Republic of Ireland
Dr Mary McCaffrey	Molecular & Cell Biology	Department of Biochemistry National University of Ireland, Cork Lee Maltings Prospect Row, Cork	Molecular characterisation of a Rab4 interacting gap-like clone
Dr Seamus Martin	Molecular & Cell Biology	Molecular Cell Biology Laboratory National University of Ireland, Maynooth Co. Kildare	Molecular regulation of apoptosis in man: Identification and characterization of components of the TRAIL 'death receptor' signalling pathway
Dr Finian Martin	Molecular & Cell Biology	Department of Pharmacology University College Dublin Belfield Dublin 4	Characterisation of the role of specific MAP kinases in modulating mammary epithelial cell survival
Dr Catherine Godson	Molecular & Cell Biology	Centre for Molecular Inflammation & Vascular Research Department of Medicine & Therapeutics Mater Hospital/UCD 41 Eccles Street Dublin 7	Lipoxin mediated gene expression in macrophages

# Appendix C

Grantholder	Sub-Committee	Institution	Project
Dr Ronald W.G. Watson and Dr. O'Neill	Molecular & Cell Biology	Department of Surgery Mater Hospital/UCD 47 Eccles Street Dublin 7	The role of the inhibitors of the apoptosis (IAP) family of proteins in delayed neutrophil apoptosis
Dr Kay Ohlendieck	Molecular and Cell Biology	Department of Pharmacology University College Dublin Belfield Dublin 4	Analysis of halothane-induced oligomerisation of the ranidine receptor and associated Ca <sup>2+</sup> -regulatory proteins in normal and malignant hyperthermia-susceptible muscle, heart and brain tissues
Dr John O'Connor	Neurosciences & Mental Health	Department of Human Anatomy & Physiology University College Dublin Earlsfort Terrace Dublin 2	The role of Jun N-terminal kinase in long-term potentiation in the dentate gyrus of the hippocampus
Dr Marina A Lynch	Neurosciences & Mental Health	Department of Physiology Trinity College Dublin 2	Analysis of the mechanisms underlying the inhibitory effect of whole body irradiation on long-term potentiation A role for IL-1B
Dr Louise Gallagher and Dr. Gill	Neurosciences & Mental Health	Department of Psychiatry Trinity Centre for Health Sciences St. James's Hospital James's Street Dublin 8	The genetics of autism: candidate gene and linkage disequilibrium screen
Professor Brian Lawlor	Neurosciences & Mental Health	Department of Psychiatry for the Elderly St. James's Hospital Dublin 8	Factors determining the nondetection of dementia in the community dwelling elderly
Dr Kieran McDermott and Dr. Sullivan	Neurosciences & Mental Health	Department of Anatomy University College Cork	The role of GDF-5 and GDNF neurotrophins and glial-neuronal interactions in models of Parkinson's disease
Dr Niamh Moran and Dr Ryan	Oncology & Haematology	Department of Clinical Pharmacology Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland 123 St. Stephen's Green Dublin 2	Identification and characterization of disulphide isomerization in the platelet itegrin, GpIIb/IIIa
Dr Margaret Worrall	Oncology & Haematology	Department of Biochemistry University College Dublin Belfield Dublin 4	The role of collagen in maspin tumour suppressor function
Dr David Croke and Dr Long	Oncology & Haematology	Department of Biochemistry Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland 123 St. Stephen's Green Dublin 2	Characterisation of gene transcripts associated with colon cancer metastasis

# Appendix C

Grantholder	Sub-Committee	Institution	Project
Dr Patrick Prendergast and Dr Blayney	Other	Department of Otolaryngology Mater Hospital Dublin 7	Computer simulation for improved biofunctionality of implants for middle-ear surgery
Professor Hannah McGee et al.	Public Health & General Practice	Health Services Research Centre Department of Psychology Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland Mercer Street Dublin 2	Health status and health care access of homeless women and their children in Dublin hostels and temporary rented accommodation
Dr Anthony Staines and Dr Crown	Public Health & General Practice	University College Dublin Earlsfort Terrace Dublin 2	The aetiology of lymphomas - A European case-control study
Dr Patrick C. Brennan	Public Health & General Practice	UCD School of Diagnostic Imaging Herbert Avenue Dublin 4	A national investigation into patient radiation doses and the setting of reference dose levels for contrast based, routine diagnostic examinations
Professor John Morrison	Reproductive Medicine	Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology NUI, Clinical Science Institute University College Hospital Galway Newcastle Road Galway	Chorionic COX-2 expression and role COX-2 inhibitors in treatment of human preterm labour
Dr Paula Gallaher and Dr O'Neill	Respiratory Disease	Department of Respiratory Medicine Beaumont Hospital Beaumont Road Dublin 9	Community acquired pneumonia-regulation of cytokine expression and investigation of gene polymorphisms associate with disease severity
Dr Charles Gallagher	Respiratory Disease	Department of Respiratory Medicine St. Vincent's Hospital Elm Park Dublin 4	Exercise limitation in cystic fibrosis

## 2. Research Project Grants Co-Funded in Health Services Research

Applicant	Project
Professor Michael Fitzgerald Child & Family Centre Ballyfermot Road Ballyfermot Dublin 10	Evaluation of a Child and Family Service: Is additional intervention in child psychiatric treatment a necessary component of effective treatment?
Professor Andrew Murphy et al. Department of General Practice Clinical Science Institute National University of Ireland Galway	Retention of rural general practitioners: A qualitative study

# Appendix C

Applicant	Project
Dr Hamish Sinclair / Dr Kelly Department of Community Health & General Practice Trinity College Dublin 2	To develop a weighted capitation formula for resource allocation within the Irish health services
Dr Ian Daly / Dr Kelleher Consultant Psychiatrist Clondalkin Mental Health Service St Loman's Hospital Palmerstown Dublin 20	A comparative study of two community-based treatment programmes
Dr Mary Wingfield National Maternity Hospital Holles Street Dublin 2	Study of the prevalence of Chlamydia Trachomatis in Dublin women of reproductive age
Dr Niamh Murphy Department of Humanities Waterford Institute of Technology Waterford	Exercise for the older adult - meeting the needs of older people and health professionals

## 3. North-South Collaborative Research Projects

Southern Partner	Northern Partner	Project
Dr Philip Newsholme / Dr Malthouse Department of Biochemistry University College Dublin Belfield, Dublin 4	Professor Peter Flatt / Dr Neville School of Biomedical Sciences University of Ulster Coleraine BT52 1SA Northern Ireland	A NMR study of amino acid metabolism and its relationship to insulin secretion in pancreatic B-cells
Professor Hugh Brady / Dr McCarthy Department of Medicine & Therapeutics UCD / Mater Hospital 41 Eccles Street Dublin 7	Dr A Peter Maxwell Regional Nephrology Unit Queen's University Belfast Belfast City Hospital 11 South Office Belfast	Identification of susceptibility genes for progressive renal disease by combined differential gene expression, gene association and genetic linkage approaches
Dr Alun Carr / Dr Tancred Department of Mechanical Engineering University College Dublin Belfield Dublin 4	Dr Gang Li / Professor Marsh Orthopaedic Research Unit Queen's University Belfast Musgrave Park Hospital Belfast BT9 7JB	Novel tissue-engineering approaches to bone graft

# Appendix C

## 4. Interdisciplinary Research Projects

### Applicant

Dr Walter McNicholas  
Department of Respiratory  
Medicine  
St. Vincent's University Hospital  
Elm Park, Dublin 4

### Co-Applciant

Dr. Mark O'Malley  
Department of Electrical and  
Electronic Engineering  
UCD Dublin 4

### Project

Novel bioengineering approaches  
to the study of upper airway  
muscle fatigue in sleep apnoea

## 5. Health Services Research Fellowships

### Applicant

Ms Molly Byrne  
Department of General Practice  
Clinical Sciences Institute  
National University of Ireland  
Galway

### Project

Baseline survey of provision of secondary cardiac preventive measures in general practice and associated patient illness perceptions

Dr Paul Beirne  
Oral Health Services  
Research Centre  
University Dental School  
Wilton  
Cork

The fluoridation debate: social and scientific dynamics

## 6. VHI / HRB Health Services Research Fellowship

### Applicant

Mr Brendan McElroy  
Department of Economics  
University College  
Cork

### Project

Estimating the need for GMS prescribing resources in Ireland

## 7. Clinical Research Training Fellowships

### Applicant

Dr Maria O'Donovan  
Department of Histology,  
St. James's Hospital  
Dublin 8

### Project

Elucidating the pathobiology of human herpes virus 8 (HHV 8) in Kaposi's sarcoma effusion lymphoma and multiple myeloma

Dr Geraldine McCormack  
Department of Pharmacology  
UCD, Dublin 4

NF-kB in the human intestinal mucosa - a functional study

Dr Edmund P. O'Mahony  
Department of Psychiatry  
Trinity Centre  
St. James's Hospital  
Dublin 8

Quantitative trait based genome scan in bipolar affective disorder sibling pairs

# Appendix C

## Applicant

Dr Michael Curry  
Liver Unit  
St. Vincent's Hospital  
Elm Park, Dublin 4

## Project

CD5+ B cells in chronic HCV infection: Clonality, cytokine production and effect on disease progression

Dr Aileen Byrne  
Department of Paediatrics  
Children's Research Centre  
Crumlin, Dublin 12

A study of the biological basis for the altered inflammatory response in premature infants

## 8. Post-Doctoral Research Fellowships

### Applicant

Dr Tanya Mulcahy  
Department of Genetics &  
Psychiatry  
TCD

### Project

Linkage disequilibrium mapping of susceptibility loci in bipolar affective disorder (Manic Depression) using DNA pooling and single nucleotide polymorphism (SNP) analysis

Dr Sandra M. O'Neill  
School of Biotechnology  
DCU

The role of cathepsin L cysteine proteinases secreted by helminth pathogens in the modulation of immune responses

Dr Mary-Rose Kenealy  
Dept. of Clinical Pharmacology  
RCSI

Hypoxic regulation of cyclooxygenase-2 gene expression and its functional role in cardiomyocytes

Dr Adele Louise Mooney  
Children's Research Centre  
OLHSC, Crumlin

A molecular genetic approach to identify virulence genes for the emerging enteropathogen, *Campylobacter* *Upsaliensis*

Dr Martina M Prendergast  
Dept. of Microbiology  
NUI, Galway

Ganglioside mimicry in *Campylobacter* *Jejuni* lipopolysaccharides and its potential relationship with Guillan-Barré Syndrome (GBS)

## 9. Clinical Research Fellowships in Nursing and Midwifery

### Applicant

Ms Mary McCarron  
School of Nursing and Midwifery  
Trinity Centre for Health Sciences  
St. James's Hospital  
James's Street  
Dublin 8

### Project

The social and economic impact of caring for people with the dual diagnosis of Down's Syndrome and Alzheimer's Dementia

Ms Patricia Leahy-Warren  
Department of Nursing Studies  
University College Cork  
Cork

The needs of first-time mothers in the post-partum period

# Appendix C

## Applicant

Mr Gerard Tobin  
School of Nursing & Midwifery  
Studies  
Trinity Centre for Health Sciences  
St. James's Hospital  
Dublin 8

## Project

An exploration of the process of breaking bad news from the perspective of the healthcare professional and the recipient

Ms Sinéad Hanafin  
Southern Health Board  
Wilton Road  
Cork

Quality in public health nursing service to families with infants under one year of age

## 10. 'New Blood' Fellowships

### Applicant

Dr Paul Cahill

### Institution

School of Biotechnology  
Dublin City University

### Project

Hemodynamic control of vascular smooth muscle cell growth

Dr Carmel Hensey

Department of Pharmacology  
UCD

Regulation of apoptosis during early development in *Xenopus laevis*

Dr Helen Roche

Department of Clinical Medicine  
St James's Hospital / TCD  
Dublin

Conjugated linoleic acid: a novel triacylglycerol lowering nutrient

Dr Joe O'Connell

Inflammatory Bowel Disease  
Research Unit  
University College  
Cork

The Fas system in the colonic epithelium: regulation of the apoptosis and proinflammatory effects of Fas ligand in inflammatory bowel disease

Dr Tom Moore

Department of Biochemistry  
University College  
Cork

The molecular genetics and biology of the pregnancy-specific glycoproteins

## 11. HRB Equipment Grants

### Applicant

Professor Stephen Carrington and Professor James Roche,  
Department of Veterinary Medicine, UCD  
and Dr Alan Baird, Department of Pharmacology, UCD

### Equipment

Dual scanning microplate spectrofluorometer

Dr Margaret Worrall, Dr Therese Kinsella and  
Professor Paul Malthouse  
Department of Biochemistry, UCD

Protein purification workstation

Dr Cliona O'Farrelly, Professor Barry Bresnihan,  
Dr John Hegarty and Dr Joe Duffy,  
St Vincent's University Hospital

Real time thermocycler

# Appendix C

## Applicant

Dr RG Watson, Dr John Fitzgerald and Dr Ronan O'Connell,  
Department of Surgery, Mater Hospital

Dr Mark Lawlor, Professor Dermot Kelleher and  
Dr Ross McManus, Department of Clinical Medicine,  
St James's Hospital and Dr Aideen Long,  
Department of Biochemistry, RSCI

### *Equipment to be shared with*

Dr Geraldine Butler, Department of Biochemistry, UCD,  
Dr Finian Martin, Department of Pharmacology, UCD and  
Dr Wim Meijer, Department of Industrial Microbiology, UCD

Dr Paul Spiers, Department of Pharmacology &  
Therapeutics, TCD,  
Dr Yuri Volkov and Professor Dermot Kelleher  
Department of Clinical Medicine, TCD

Dr Kevin McGuigan, Department of Chemistry and Physics,  
RCSI

Professor John O'Leary and Professor Eamon Sweeney,  
Department of Histopathology, and Professor Brian Sheppard,  
Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, TCD

Dr Angus Bell, Professor Charles Dorman and  
Professor Tim Foster, Department of Microbiology, TCD

Dr Rosemary O'Connor and Professor Tom Cotter,  
Department of Biochemistry, and Dr Joe O'Connell,  
Department of Medicine, UCC

Dr Helen Whelton, Professor Denis O'Mullane and  
Dr Judith Cochran, Oral Health Services Research Centre,  
UCC

Professor S Jennings and Dr S Kleefield,  
Air Quality Technology Centre, Department of Physics,  
NUI Galway

Professor John Morrison, Department of Obstetrics and  
Gynaecology, and Dr Terry Smith, National Diagnostics  
Centre, NUI Galway

## Equipment

Coulter EPCIS XL 4 Colour Cytometer

Gene Microarray Facility

Cell imaging system

Arc Solar Simulator Lamp

Laser capture microdissection system

Fluorescence/luminescence spectrometer

Time lapse video microscopy facility

Ion chromatograph

Condensation particle counter

Light cyclers

# Notes

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