

# Annual Report 2002

Health Research Board An Bord Taighde Sláinte

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Established in 1986 under Statutory Instrument, 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 in Ireland, Northern 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.

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# Health Research Board Board Members - to April 2002

**Professor Michael Murphy (Chairman)**

Dean of Medicine  
University College Cork

**Professor Hugh Brady**

Department of Medicine and Therapeutics,  
University College Dublin

**Ms Ann Cleary**

Department of Sociology  
University College Dublin

**Dr Eibhlín Connolly**

Department of Health and Children  
Dublin

**Professor Robert Daly**

Department of Psychiatry  
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**Professor John Feely**

Department of Pharmacology and  
Therapeutics  
Trinity College Dublin

**Professor Desmond Fitzgerald**

Department of Clinical Pharmacology  
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**Mr Charlie Hardy**

Department of Health and Children  
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**Professor Bernadette Herity**

Department of Public Health Medicine  
and Epidemiology  
University College Dublin

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**Mr Damien Maguire**

Solicitor  
Maynooth, Co Kildare

**Professor Peter McCarthy**

Department of Radiology  
National University of Ireland  
Galway

**Professor Thomas O'Dowd**

Department of General Practice  
Trinity College Dublin

**Mr Edward Rowland**

Ulster Bank  
Tallaght, Dublin

**Professor Donald Weir**

Department of Clinical Medicine  
Trinity College Dublin

**Dr Helen Whelton**

Oral Health Services Research Centre  
University College Cork

# Health Research Board Board Members as at 31 December 2002

**Professor Hugh Brady (Chairman)**

Department of Medicine and Therapeutics,  
University College Dublin

**Professor Desmond Fitzgerald**

Department of Clinical Pharmacology  
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland  
Dublin

**Professor Dermot Barnes-Holmes**

Department of Psychology  
National University of Ireland  
Maynooth

**Ms Leonie Clarke**

IPHA Scientific and Regulatory Affairs  
Manager  
IPHA, Dublin

**Professor Tom Cotter**

Department of Biochemistry  
University College Cork

**Mr Niall Daly**

Solicitor  
Cork

**Mr Michael Griffith**

Fighting Blindness /  
Irish Research Charities Group  
Dublin

**Professor William Hall**

Department of Medical Microbiology  
University College Dublin

**Mr Charlie Hardy**

Planning and Evaluation Unit  
Department of Health and Children

**Professor Dermot Kelleher**

Department of Clinical Medicine  
Trinity Centre for Health Sciences  
St James's Hospital Dublin

**Dr Kevin Kelleher**

Director of Public Health  
Mid Western Health Board

**Professor Tim O'Brien**

Department of Medicine  
University College Hospital  
Galway

**Professor Tony Pembroke**

Department of Chemical and Environmental  
Sciences  
University of Limerick

**Professor Anne Scott**

School of Nursing  
Dublin City University

**Professor Bob Stout**

Research and Development Office  
Belfast

**Mr John Travers**

Chairman NTDA  
Bord Fáilte  
Baggot Street Bridge  
Dublin 2

## Chairman's Statement

It was a great honour for me to be elected chair of the Board appointed in May 2002 and to follow in the able footsteps of my predecessor, Professor Michael Murphy, Dean of Medicine at University College Cork.

As promised in *Making Knowledge Work for Health – A Strategy for Health Research*, Minister Micheál Martin made a number of significant changes to the statutory instrument governing the Health Research Board that have widened representation on the Board. The seven universities are now entitled to nominate eight members of the Board and their nominees must be broadly representative of the disciplines involved in health research. In addition, the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment and the chief executive officers of the health boards may each nominate one member. The Minister may also appoint one member active in research in Northern Ireland, one member from a research charity, one member with expertise in the pharmaceutical or medical devices industry, and one member of the Department of Health and Children. The result is a Board that is more representative of the interests and disciplines involved in health research than formerly, and one that can play a fuller part in the new national research landscape that has emerged in the past few years.

On its appointment, the Board spent time reviewing its responsibilities for corporate governance in the light of the importance of the manner in which the Board conducts its business. To assist us, we were fortunate to have had access to a penultimate draft of the valuable 'On Board' guide subsequently published by the Association of Chief Executives of State Agencies and the Institute of Public Administration. We are also grateful to David Duffy of Prospectus Consulting who advised the Board on recent thinking in the private and public sectors on corporate responsibilities.

The new Board benefited from the work done by the previous Board in developing a Corporate Strategy for the Health Research Board for the period 2002–2006. The new Board adopted the Corporate Strategy to ensure that the HRB plays an effective role in the implementation of the commitments of *Making Knowledge Work for Health* and the health strategy *Quality and Fairness: A Health System for You*. The new strategy will also help the HRB play its part in the national task of building world-class research activity in Ireland to ensure the economic and social development of the country.

The objectives of the HRB as set out in the Corporate Strategy are:

1. to encourage the creation and application of knowledge for health and social gain, the growth of intellectual property and evidence relevant to health and social gain, and the emergence of a knowledge-based health system, economy and society;
2. to be the lead national organisation in relation to support for, and co-ordination of, scientific research for health and social gain, including basic and translational research, health services research, population health and practice-based research, and to promote the highest ethical standards in research and good research practice;

3. to promote the growth of a value-added research and development capability in the health system, in partnership with other relevant health organisations;
4. to impact on health and social policy and services through high-quality research and information;
5. to be the main advocate for the development of research for health and social gain;
6. to make the HRB an employer of choice in its field.

These objectives are based on the following assumptions:

- that the commitments in *Making Knowledge Work for Health* will be implemented;
- that the funding needed to enhance the role of the HRB will be provided by the Department of Health and Children;
- that the HRB will retain the confidence of the research community;
- that the demand for research funding from the HRB will grow;
- that peace will prevail on the island and that the international dimension to research will grow;
- that the HRB will be able to recruit and retain staff with the relevant competencies to develop its role.

We believe that these objectives are challenging and the assumptions reasonable. The HRB will undertake in 2005 an organisational audit of its activities to establish the extent to which these objectives have been achieved.

A highlight of the year was the award of fourteen programme grants following a highly competitive, peer-review process. These awards, worth 12 million over five years, represented the largest single investment in research for health ever made by the HRB and resulted from the exceptional increase in the budget from the Department of Health and Children in 2001. These awards were in addition to the HRB's regular project grant and fellowships awards. Three broad areas of health research were targeted in this call, namely:

- clinical and biomedical research, in particular translational or 'bench to bedside' research that is patient oriented but strongly underpinned by scientific excellence;
- research in health services, epidemiology, public health and primary care that addresses issues of relevance to health policy and health services in Ireland;
- nursing and midwifery research.

In all three areas, teams were encouraged to take an all-island approach and to include researchers from Northern Ireland where appropriate. The fourteen successful applicant teams are now funded to undertake research in their chosen fields to the best standards in the world. The research undertaken by these teams will increase the profile of Irish research and offer exciting training opportunities to scientists and healthcare professionals and, over time, will improve the quality of care to patients and clients of the health services.

One of the signs of the growing maturity of the research environment in Ireland has been the welcome emergence of new research funding bodies – Science Foundation Ireland, the Research Council for Science, Technology and Engineering and the Research Council for Humanities and

Social Science. The emergence of new bodies and enhanced roles for existing bodies such as the Higher Education Authority highlighted the need to ensure coherence in the operation of these bodies as they contributed to building world-class research capacity in Ireland. The HRB was pleased to be a signatory of the 'Merrion Agreement' between a number of the research funding bodies, under which they agreed to work together to ensure coherence and complementarity in their programmes and operations. The HRB assumed the chair of the standing committee of the research funding bodies established under the Agreement for its first year. By the end of the year considerable progress had been made towards achieving greater coherence in programmes of the participating agencies, making information more easily accessible to the research community, and standardising some procedures.

The new priority given to research by government also raised the issue of how best to co-ordinate research policy and responsibilities at national level. The government responded by requesting the Irish Council for Science, Technology and Innovation to establish a Commission to recommend arrangements for the co-ordination of research policy. The CEO of the HRB was appointed to the Commission by the Minister for Health and Children, and the HRB made a submission to the Commission in August. The HRB welcomed the opportunity presented by the Commission to review organisational arrangements and responsibilities for research and to put in place co-ordinating arrangements that recognised the diversity and complementarity of the research activities funded by different government departments. The Commission completed its report in December. The CEO, together with the chairman of the Higher Education Authority, felt it necessary to include a statement in the final report to highlight the need to protect the independence of the recommended co-ordinating arrangements for research policy from the particular interests of any department responsible for co-ordination.

I would like to thank my fellow Board members for their commitment, advice and diligence in carrying out their responsibilities for governance of the HRB and for promoting the interests of health research. I would also like to acknowledge the hard work and professionalism of the staff of the HRB and their contribution to building the profile and capacity of health research in this country.

Professor Hugh Brady  
Chairman of the Board

# Chief Executive's Report

The year 2002 was an extremely busy one for the Health Research Board. The term of office of the Board appointed in 1997 came to an end in April and a new Board was appointed by the Minister for Health and Children. Professor Hugh Brady was elected chair at the first meeting of the Board in June. The Board took up office under a new statutory instrument signed by the Minister in April that included changes proposed in *Making Knowledge Work for Health – A Strategy for Health Research* and revised governance arrangements.

The adoption of a Corporate Strategy for 2002-2006 by the outgoing Board and its endorsement by the new Board was an important step in 2002. The Corporate Strategy was prepared to ensure that the HRB plays an effective role in the implementation of *Making Knowledge Work for Health* and the other aspects of the health strategy, *Quality and Fairness*, that affect research and information management for health.

An important step in implementing the Corporate Strategy was the establishment of a new division in the HRB – Research and Development for Health – to support those commitments of *Making Knowledge Work for Health* aimed at building the research and development capacity of the health system. The new Division made an important contribution to developing activities under the Ireland–Northern Ireland–National Cancer Institute Cancer Consortium, including the award, following expert peer review, of funding for cancer clinical trials in four hospitals and the offer of funding for an all-island co-operative group to co-ordinate cancer clinical trial activity on the island of Ireland. Access was also negotiated to the Cochrane Library of systematic reviews of health research from any internet-linked computer on the island of Ireland, representing the first time that such access was granted anywhere. Fellowships were also offered for the first time by the HRB to encourage health professionals to undertake systematic reviews of the research on health issues.

As part of its role in promoting high ethical standards in research, the HRB published a discussion document entitled *Genetic Research and Human Biological Samples: The Legal and Ethical Considerations*, written by Asim Sheikh of the Department of Forensic Medicine, University College Dublin.

The National Physical and Sensory Disability Database was launched in March by the Disability Databases Division and, by the end of the year, almost 15,000 individuals had been registered. The new database is modelled on the National Intellectual Disability Database, which has proved so successful in providing comprehensive and accurate information for decision making in relation to the planning, funding and management of services for people with intellectual disability.

Considerable progress was made in 2002 with the studies in which the Child Health and Epidemiology Division is collaborating with Trinity College and the US National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. Recruitment to the studies on folic acid and neural tube defects has exceeded expectations, with 972 families recruited at the end of the year, of which 491 are from the Republic of Ireland, 112 are from Northern Ireland and 369 are from England and Wales. Recruitment to a related study on orofacial clefts has reached 725 families. During the year the research team published four papers in international peer-reviewed scientific journals. As the year ended, an application was being made to the US National Institutes of Health to renew the contract for the studies for another three years.

Recruitment targets were met or were exceeded in the case of the studies on the genetic epidemiology of schizophrenia and alcoholism in which the Mental Health Research Division is a partner with Virginia Commonwealth University and which are funded by the US National Institutes of Health. In a major publication in the *American Journal of Genetics*, the team identified a link between the Dysbindin gene, on the long arm of chromosome six, and schizophrenia. The discovery has been hailed as one of the most significant findings in the molecular study of the disease. The Division also published the decennial census of the psychiatric inpatient population, representing a series that goes back to 1961. Information from the National Psychiatric In-Patient Reporting system was included for the first time in the Public Health Information System maintained by the Department of Health and Children.

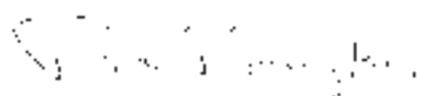
The National Documentation Centre on Drug Use, managed by the Drug Misuse Research Division, was opened in December. The Documentation Centre includes a state-of-the-art electronic library of Irish drug-related research that can be accessed online. A research paper on children attending addiction treatment services in Dublin between 1990 and 1999 has been accepted for publication in the journal *European Addiction Research*. The Division published eight papers on trends in treated drug misuse 1996-2000 and three issues of its successful newsletter, *Drugnet Ireland*.

The Irish Council for Science, Technology and Innovation established a Commission to recommend to government arrangements for the co-ordination of research policy. This was a welcome opportunity to review the arrangements in other countries for the co-ordination of research and the place of health research within those arrangements and to recommend the best framework for Ireland. A government decision on the recommendations of the report is awaited.

The HRB made considerable progress in 2002 in developing its support systems. A Human Relations and Organisation Development Manager was recruited to assist the HRB become an employer of choice, as set out in the Corporate Strategy. Much work was done to prepare for the introduction of a system of performance management and development. The security of the organisation's ICT systems was increased and a new website launched. The HRB's headquarters was vacated to enable the upgrading of electrical and ICT systems and refurbishment of the building. New office accommodation was acquired and renovated in Holbrook House.

A disappointment of 2002 was the continued unavailability of a national health information strategy, as promised by the Department of Health and Children on a number of occasions. As a key source of information for health, the HRB is keenly aware of the need for a national strategy to guide the development of information for health and to deal in a consistent manner with data protection and other issues.

I would like to thank the Chair, Professor Hugh Brady, and the other members of the Board for their guidance and support during the year and to acknowledge the hard work and commitment of my colleagues on the staff of the HRB.



Dr Ruth Barrington  
Chief Executive

# Research Funding and Policy Division

## Research Funding and Policy Division

The Research Funding and Policy Division works to support the first two objectives described in the HRB Corporate Strategy 2002–2006, namely:

1. To encourage the creation and application of knowledge for health and social gain, the growth of intellectual property and evidence relevant to health and social gain and the emergence of a knowledge-based health system, economy and society;
2. To be the lead national organisation in relation to support for, and co-ordination of, scientific research for health and social gain, including basic and translational research, health services research, population health and practice-based research, and to promote the highest ethical standards in research and good research practice.

The Division achieves this by supporting research in third-level institutions and hospitals, and by participating in national and international fora to promote the strategic development of health research in Ireland.

### Achievements in 2002

The HRB continued to support high-quality health research through open competition and peer review. A highlight of 2002 was the successful completion of the HRB's call for five-year programme grants. Thirteen programme grants were awarded, worth between 500,000 and 1,000,000 each. The programmes support inter-disciplinary teams working on extensive or long-term research projects relevant to health in Ireland. The awards made spanned clinical and biomedical research, in particular 'translational research', focusing on the translation of research findings into improved understanding of disease and its treatment, as well as research in health services, epidemiology, public health and primary care that addresses issues of relevance to health policy and health services in Ireland.

The HRB's project grants schemes provided support for 70 new research projects in Irish universities and hospitals. These included 60 general project grants, four Ireland–Northern Ireland co-operation awards, four awards co-funded with other agencies and targeted at health services research, and two awards made through the inter-disciplinary grants scheme. A special award was made to a project to explore the possibility of a link between autism and intestinal dysfunction, with dedicated funding from the Department of Health and Children. The HRB Summer Student scheme also proved popular, with 46 awards made to undergraduates to carry out research projects in their summer holidays, while seven travel awards were made jointly with the British Council.

The HRB is committed to building capacity in health research by supporting individual researchers at different stages in their careers. With this in mind, a total of 25 fellowships were awarded to professionals to help them to develop their research careers.

Overall, co-operation across the island was much in evidence in the HRB's research awards. As well as the four awards made with the R&D Office in Northern Ireland under the Ireland–Northern Ireland co-operation scheme, cross-border links were a feature of three of the programme grant awards and two of the fellowships.

A complete list of grants awarded in 2002 may be found in the Appendix I.

The Health Status and Health Gain Unit in NUI Galway was formally evaluated by an international review team, which recommended that funding continue for another year. The Unit is gathering valuable longitudinal information on the health status of three cohorts and aims to report its findings in 2004.

The Division was also pleased to assist both the Women's Health Council in its call for a research programme award in the area of women's health and the National Implementation Committee in its call for the Rostered Year Replacement Ratio Project for the BSc in Nursing.

The Division developed its IT systems further in 2002, a key development being the piloting of a new, online grant application system (eGrants) for two research committees. The system was formally evaluated and, in general, was positively received by the research community. In addition, a new research database was developed to serve as a register of HRB-funded research. The database records the details of all awards made by the HRB and will assist in evaluating the outcomes of HRB-funded research.

The Division was involved in a number of events aimed at communicating HRB research to a wider audience. The Watts Medal was awarded to Shirley Potter, a fifth-year medical student at NUI Galway, for her project 'Corticosteroids and fetal vasculature: the effects of hydrocortisone, dexamethasone and beta methasone on human umbilical artery'. Shirley carried out her project in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at NUI Galway under the supervision of Professor John Morrison.

The work of the Division was also communicated to the nursing and midwifery professions through the activities of the joint appointee with the National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery.

The 2002 Graves Lecture, jointly sponsored by the HRB and the Royal Irish Academy, was given by Professor Gerald Tomkin from Trinity College Dublin. Following the lecture, Professor Tomkin was awarded the Graves Medal.

Receptions were held for new HRB fellows and for the programme grant awards, at which the Minister for Health and Children was guest of honour. The Division also played an active part in the JMS Doctor awards.

Throughout 2002, the Division worked on a number of issues relevant to the policy framework in which the HRB supports research. Guidelines on good research practice were developed and implemented for all HRB-funded research. The Division completed its work with the Research Overheads Steering Group established by the HEA and Forfas; the final report will be published in 2003. The Division is committed to working with external organisations on issues of mutual interest, in particular the other research funding agencies, and played an active part in the Merrion Group of Funding Agencies.

Members of the Division represented the HRB as participants in both the Higher Skills Group and the Steering Group for the Baseline Assessment of the Public Research System in Ireland in the areas of Biotechnology and ICT. The Division also represented the HRB at the European Medical Research Council (EMRC), part of the European Science Foundation (ESF).

## Looking forward

In 2003, the Division will continue to implement the HRB Corporate Strategy by introducing a number of new research support schemes. A new research fellowship scheme in primary care is currently being developed with the aim of issuing a call in the second quarter of 2003. A series of science writing workshops, to be run jointly with the British Council, are planned for 2003, with the aim of helping researchers in the early stages of their careers to improve their writing skills. A targeted call in the area of Hepatitis C and blood utilisation will be completed in 2003.

The evaluation function within the Division will be strengthened further, enabling a more strategic approach to be taken in identifying funding priorities. An in-depth review of the HRB's project grants scheme will be completed, focusing in particular on its role in training.

Co-ordinating arrangements arising from the ICSTI Commission will be established and implemented as required by the Department of Health and Children. A plan will be developed to implement the recommendations of the Research Overheads Report. The Division will continue to support the HRB's contribution to the ESF and work with other funding agencies at national and international level on areas of common interest.

The Division's online applications system (eGrants) will be developed further with a view to moving towards full online applications by 2004.

Four new appointments were made in 2002. Anne Cody joined the Division as Research Grants Manager, with responsibility for the Division's portfolio of grant schemes. Norma O'Donovan joined as Evaluation Manager, with responsibility for developing the evaluation function within the Division. With backgrounds in academic research in Ireland and abroad, both brought additional skills and expertise to the team, which will be crucial in delivering the objectives of the Corporate Strategy. Sarah Madden joined the team, with responsibility for the development of the eGrants system. Sarah Condell joined the Division as advisor in nursing research and, working jointly with the HRB and the National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery, will lead the implementation of the Strategy for Nursing and Midwifery Research in Ireland.

## Staff of the Division

Mairead O'Driscoll PhD, Head of Division

Patricia Butler MA

Anne Cody PhD

Sarah Condell BNS MA RGN RM RNT

Patricia Cranley BA

Kay Duggan-Walls BSc HDip

Sarah Madden BA

Fiona McGann BSc

Norma O'Donovan PhD

# Child Health Epidemiology Division

# Child Health Epidemiology Division

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

1. To continue the collaborative research programme with the US National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) and Trinity College Dublin (TCD) on the aetiology and prevention of neural tube defects (NTDs), orofacial clefts and other congenital malformations.
2. To bid for a further contract from the NICHD to finance the continuation of the above research programme for a further three-year period.
3. To investigate the outcome and recurrence risk of spina bifida in Ireland.

## Achievements in 2002

### **Research on congenital malformations**

Most of the work of the Child Health Epidemiology Division during 2002 continued to revolve around the collaborative research programme on congenital malformations involving the Health Research Board, Trinity College Dublin and the US National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD).contract research on neural tube defects (NTDs) and orofacial clefts. This research programme has already made significant contributions to understanding the aetiology and prevention of NTDs and other congenital malformations. The emphasis in this phase of our research is on recruitment to the studies of families affected by these conditions.

The research team continued to liaise with branches of the Irish Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (IASBAH), the Northern Ireland Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (NI ASBAH) and ASBAH UK (England and Wales). Recruitment of members from IASBAH and NI ASBAH took place through special meetings and home visits. Recruitment of members of ASBAH UK took place through the mailing of self-administered questionnaires and buccal swab samples. The research team continued to liaise with the public health nurses in the various community care areas throughout Ireland. Families identified by the public health nurses were recruited through home visits. To date, 972 families where a member has spina bifida have been recruited: 491 from Ireland, 112 from Northern Ireland and 369 from England and Wales.

Recruitment of families to the orofacial cleft study continued through cleft clinics held at Our Lady's Hospital for Sick Children Crumlin, the Children's Hospital Temple Street, St James's Hospital and Sligo General Hospital, and through the Cleft Lip and Palate association of Ireland (CLAPAI). To date, 725 families where a member has a cleft have been recruited, with 552 from the hospital clinics and 173 from CLAPAI. Due to the successful recruitment and increased workload involved with the orofacial cleft study, a Research Assistant was employed in July to work on the study.

Due to the large number of participants being recruited from both studies, a Data Management Assistant was hired in June to assist with the checking and coding of questionnaires and data entry onto the study database. During the year the research team published four papers in international peer-reviewed scientific journals on the Division's research on congenital malformations.

#### **Bid for a further contract from the NICHD**

A most important task during 2002 was to prepare a bid for another contract from the NICHD for a further three-year period to facilitate the continuation and expansion of our collaborative research programme on congenital malformations. This new research proposal has been finalised and will be submitted for peer-review assessment to the NICHD in January 2003.

#### **Hip fracture: risk factors and outcome**

Hip fracture is a growing public health problem as the proportion of older people in our population increases. This Division has been collaborating with the Departments of Public Health Medicine and Epidemiology in University College Dublin and the Departments of Diagnostic Imaging and Preventive Medicine in St Vincent's University Hospital Dublin in a case-control study of hip fracture in older Irish women. The third and final research paper based on this study was published during the year. This paper reported the findings of a study that compared the outcome at two years for women who had a hip fracture with that of a control group. The findings illustrate the devastating effect of hip fracture on a person's quality of life and underline the importance of implementing public health strategies to prevent these injuries in older people. A paper on this study was presented at the Summer Scientific Meeting of the Faculty of Public Health Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland in May.

### **Looking Forward**

Continuing and extending the research on neural tube defects, the Division will co-ordinate recruitment of subject families through liaison with the relevant associations in Ireland, Northern Ireland, England and Wales and will continue recruitment of families through the public health nurses.

Continuing the research on orofacial clefts, the Division will co-ordinate recruitment of subject families through liaison with the Cleft Lip and Palate Association of Ireland and through the cleft clinics at the Children's Hospital Temple Street, Our Lady's Hospital Crumlin, St James's Hospital and Sligo General Hospital.

An important task for the Division in 2003 will be to submit the bid and prepare any additional paperwork needed for a further contract from the NICHD for an additional three-year period to facilitate the continuation of our collaborative research programme on congenital malformations.

## Publications

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## Staff of the Division

Peadar Kirke MB FFPHMI FFPHM MSc DCH DObst, Head of Division

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# Disability Databases Division

## Disability Databases Division

The Disability Databases Division of the Health Research Board manages two national service-planning databases for people with disabilities. Established in 1995, the National Intellectual Disability Database (NIDD) provides a comprehensive and accurate information base for decision making in planning, funding, and managing services for people with intellectual disability. The development of a new database, the National Physical and Sensory Disability Database (NPSDD), was co-ordinated by the Division and national implementation of this information system commenced in 2002. The role of the Disability Databases Division is to ensure that relevant and accurate information is available to enable the Department of Health and Children, the health boards and the voluntary sector to provide appropriate services designed to meet the changing needs of people with intellectual, physical or sensory disabilities. The Division assists the HRB in meeting its corporate objective of impacting on health and social policy and services through high-quality research and information through its seven key objectives:

1. To establish and build the reputation of the NPSDD nationally in conjunction with our strategic partners in the Department of Health and Children, the health boards and the voluntary sector.
2. To establish an information system to provide accurate data on the numbers of people with autism and their service needs, in conjunction with our strategic partners.
3. To maintain appropriate, comprehensive, high-quality, accessible and timely information on which to plan and organise services for people with disabilities.
4. To encourage and support regional use of the disability databases.
5. To develop the research, policy, and planning functions of the disability databases.
6. To promote the disability databases (at national and international levels) through presentations at national and international scientific conferences and through publications in national and international scientific journals.
7. To ensure the disability databases comply with national objectives in relation to health information, including those of the National Health Information Strategy and the Public Health Information System, and with health board objectives regarding performance management.

### Achievements in 2002

The Minister for Health and Children formally launched the National Physical and Sensory Disability Database in March 2002. Throughout the year the Division provided intensive support to eight health boards as they sought to identify and interview eligible participants. At year-end almost 15,000 individuals were registered on the database in eight of the ten health boards. The software in use during initial implementation of the NPSDD was developed, tested and implemented by the Division, and comprehensive software training was provided to all relevant health board personnel. The Division recruited software consultants to develop a functional specification and data model for national, centralised software to support the NPSDD and to advise on the appropriate telecommunications infrastructure. This was achieved through a comprehensive consultation process with all stakeholders and was project-managed by the Division.

As a first step in our longer-term objective to improve regional use of the information contained in the disability databases, the Division developed and delivered a training programme on the fundamentals of constructing reports and query generation to 43 users of the National Intellectual Disability Database in September 2002. Seven health boards submitted their regional datasets for 2002 to the HRB for analysis in June 2002 and these data have been validated. Data from one health board are awaited at year-end. The NIDD facilitated the collection of data to measure two of the four national performance indicators for intellectual disability services.

Exploratory discussions took place between the Division, the Department of Health and Children and key clinical personnel with a view to identifying the most appropriate method of developing an information system to identify the numbers of people with autism and their service needs, one of the key initiatives in the government's health strategy, *Quality and Fairness: A Health System for You*.

There was increased use of the disability databases by researchers in 2002, including those carrying out commissioned research on behalf of other statutory bodies, and the Division is happy to facilitate the extended use of these important databases. The Division avails of every opportunity to promote the disability databases at national and international level. Of note in 2002 was the presentation of two papers at the inaugural conference of the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual Disability (IASSID) Europe in Dublin in June. The Division continues to provide advice and guidance on the establishment and maintenance of service-planning databases to colleagues here in Ireland and abroad. During 2002 such assistance was provided to groups working in Saudi Arabia, Russia, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The Division's pages on the revamped HRB website were revised to expand the amount of information available on our work, to provide extensive detail on the operation of the disability databases, and to link our work to the delivery of services at health board level.

## Looking forward

The Division's seven objectives will continue to guide our work in 2003. Priorities include:

- the extension of the NPSDD to all ten health boards;
- the development and implementation of national, centralised software to support the National Physical and Sensory Disability Database;
- a comprehensive evaluation of the NPSDD involving participants, health boards, representative groups, and other statutory bodies;
- the identification of an appropriate measure of ability and functioning for adults with physical and sensory disabilities for inclusion in the NPSDD;
- the publication of annual reports from the NIDD for 2001, 2002 and, pending data availability, for 2003; and
- the development of a comprehensive reports module for the NIDD software to further promote regional use of the database for service-planning purposes.

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# Drug Misuse Research Division

## Drug Misuse Research Division

The Drug Misuse Research Division (DMRD) is involved in national and international research, and information gathering and dissemination on drugs and their misuse in Ireland. Through its activities, the DMRD aims to inform policy and contribute to the academic understanding of drug misuse. The DMRD is funded by national and EU sources, and by contract research. The Division maintains the National Drug Treatment Reporting System (NDTRS), a national epidemiological database on treated drug misuse in Ireland. The Division is also the designated Irish Focal Point of REITOX (the European Information Network on Drugs and Drug Addiction) which is co-ordinated 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 to develop and disseminate standardised drug-related information. The government has designated the DMRD as the central point to which all research data and information should be channelled. To facilitate this informational role, the Division has established the National Documentation Centre on Drug Use. The Documentation Centre provides access to all relevant and up-to-date information and research in the field of drug use in Ireland and internationally.

The Drug Misuse Research Division has five core objectives:

- To undertake and facilitate research of the highest scientific standards in the area of drug misuse;
- To maintain and develop the National Documentation Centre as a national and international resource on drug misuse;
- To respond in a timely and appropriate manner to the annual workplan of the EMCDDA;
- To continue to expand the coverage of the NDTRS and to increase awareness of the value of NDTRS data as a basis for research and planning;
- To work closely with key Irish agencies to help address the priority information needs in the area of drug misuse in Ireland.

### Achievements in 2002

Under its contractual obligations with the EMCDDA, the Division prepared a National Report on the drug situation in Ireland and a progress report on the implementation of the Joint Action on New Synthetic Drugs. During the year the Division was an active participant in the EMCDDA's electronic database on Exchange on Drug Demand Reduction Action (EDDRA). Projects in the EDDRA database are chosen to represent 'best practice' in drug demand reduction activities in the EU member states.

In December the National Documentation Centre on Drug Use was opened by Noel Ahern TD, Minister of State with special responsibility for drugs strategy. The Centre is a unique information resource providing researchers, policy makers, and other interested parties with access to all relevant and up-to-date information and research in the field of drug misuse in Ireland and internationally. One of the unique features of the Centre is an electronic library containing the full text of all Irish drug-related research, which can be accessed through the Centre's website ([www.hrb.ie/ndc](http://www.hrb.ie/ndc)).

The Division continued to expand the coverage of the National Drug Treatment Reporting System (NDTRS). DMRD staff continued to provide training on the concepts and requirements of the NDTRS to health professionals and service providers involved in the provision of drug treatment services.

The Division launched a new publication series (Occasional Papers) to provide researchers, policy makers and others working in the drugs area with research findings presented in a user-friendly format. The first eight Occasional Papers focused on trends in treated drug misuse, by health board area, between 1996 and 2000.

Staff of the Division participated in the expert group on the epidemiology of drug misuse convened by the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe. They also contributed information on the extent, patterns and trends in drug misuse in Ireland for the annual report of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme.

Three issues of *Drugnet Ireland*, the newsletter of the DMRD, were published in 2002. Its role is to disseminate information, news and research among interested parties involved in the drugs area in Ireland. The readership has continually grown during 2002, with over 1,500 copies of each issue distributed.

A number of staffing changes occurred during 2002. In May Lucy Dillon (Research Officer) left the Division after more than three years to take up a new post with the Centre for Social Research in London. In September Aonghus Collins (Information Assistant) was appointed to work in the new National Documentation Centre on Drug Use. Also in September, Paul Cahill (NDTRS Analyst) began a three-year career break to work on his doctoral thesis at the University of Ulster. Earlier in the year Paul was awarded a HRB Health Services Research Fellowship. In December Mary O'Brien (Senior Researcher and NDTRS Co-ordinator) retired from the HRB after almost 30 years. She will be best remembered for her contribution to the understanding of drug misuse in Ireland and in Europe.

## Looking Forward

In 2003 the Division will update its publication 'An overview of drug issues in Ireland'. Published every three years, this resource document provides an overview of issues related to drug use in Ireland, focusing on information available up to mid-2003. A research paper entitled 'Children attending addiction treatment services in Dublin, 1990–1999' will be published in an academic journal. Further issues of *Drugnet Ireland* and the Occasional Papers series are also planned.

## Publications

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- O'Brien M, Kelleher T and Cahill P (2002) *Trends in treated drug misuse in the North Western Health Board area 1996–2000*. Occasional Paper No. 2. Dublin: Health Research Board.
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# Mental Health Research Division

## Mental Health Research Division

The Mental Health Research Division (MHRD) of the HRB carries out research and information activities in the field of mental health and mental illness. Staff of the Division are involved in research projects on the genetics of schizophrenia and alcohol dependence, and service availability, need and usage in the mental health area. The Division compiles and analyses national epidemiological information on mental illness in Ireland. Two important databases relating to mental health, the National Psychiatric In-patient Reporting System (NPIRS) and the Psychiatric Case Register, are hosted by the Division. The NPIRS collects information on all admissions to and discharges from psychiatric hospitals and units in Ireland. The Case Register collects longitudinal information regarding users and usage of inpatient and outpatient psychiatric services in defined geographical areas in Ireland. Both databases are invaluable sources of information for planning and research in the mental health area.

Key objectives of the Mental Health Research Division include:

- To further develop the MHRD as a centre of excellence in mental health research.
- To develop the quality and timeliness of the NPIRS as the national epidemiological database in the mental health area and promote its use as a research, policy and planning tool.
- To develop the quality of the Psychiatric Case Registers based in the MHRD.
- To ensure that the NPIRS and Case Register databases comply with national objectives in relation to health information, for example, the Public Health Information System, and with health board objectives regarding performance management – performance indicators.
- To improve communication and dissemination in relation to activities of the MHRD in accordance with HRB policy and corporate style.

The work of the MHRD is most strongly related to objective 4 of the HRB Corporate Strategy. Objectives 1 and 6 are also reflected in the work of the Division. Thus, the collection, creation and application of information, knowledge and research for health and social gain are priority activities.

### Achievements in 2002

Work continued in 2002 on developing the psychiatric databases based in the MHRD, in particular their role in relation to evidence-based decision making.

National Psychiatric In-patient Reporting System (NPIRS): The NPIRS Futures Committee in the MHRD has been working very successfully on the strategic development and updating of the NPIRS database. This includes work with the National Mental Health Performance Indicator Group in the production of performance indicator information at health board level. In addition, the NPIRS team continues to work to advance computerisation of NPIRS returns, particularly in the ERHA. The HRB Patient Administration System was redesigned during 2002 and demonstrated with a view to implementation in a number of facilities. A review of the working of the NPIRS in each health board is almost completed, following site visits and measures introduced to increase the timeliness and quality of NPIRS data collection. Work has progressed on the development of new NPIRS reporting protocols, instruction and training manuals. It is anticipated that these will be finalised during 2003 and rolled out with MHRD-delivered training

in each health board area. NPIRS information is being integrated into the Public Health Information System. This will facilitate a wider dissemination of NPIRS.

A Research and Information Officer was recruited to the Division during 2002. The officer is working with the NPIRS team in the review, evaluation and promotion of NPIRS and the software underlying this database.

Ten regional Bulletins in the form of newsletters based on the Activities report for 2001 and targeted at each health board area were produced and disseminated, with very positive reaction and feedback.

Census of Psychiatric Hospital and Units 2001: The decennial census of patients resident in Irish psychiatric units and hospitals was published in 2002: *Irish Hospitals and Units Census 2001*. The census included those resident in hostel facilities.

The Two County Psychiatric Case Registers: During 2002, data input on the Roscommon and Westmeath Case Registers continued, as did input on the St Loman's Register. Liaison with associates working on the registers continued. Re-engineering of the Case Register software system started in 2002 and this should result in significant efficiencies in the recording of information. Funding is being sought for a researcher to work on this database.

### **Mental health research**

The MHRD is in the process of carrying out a number of research projects in the mental health area and funding is being sought for new project start-ups in 2003. In addition, the MHRD is collaborating with researchers in the universities in the production of academic papers. Provision and interpretation of data from the NPIRS databases by HRB staff helps inform researchers and health board personnel carrying out audit and research in the mental health area.

The Day Hospital Study: A study of day hospitals in two health board areas is nearing completion. The project examines (a) the nature of day hospital and day centre services, (b) the utilisation of the day hospital and (c) day hospital staff and patient views.

The aims of the study are:

- to identify the extent and appropriateness of current provision;
- to explore the views of mental health specialists;
- to examine the profile of day hospital patients;
- to explore patients' satisfaction with day hospitals;
- to provide useful indicators as to how the existing provision may be strengthened and revised as appropriate.

Data were collected by means of questionnaires, psychometric measures and interview techniques. Fieldwork has been completed and the study will be published in 2003.

The Irish-Affected Sib-Pair Study of Alcohol Dependence: This project aims to identify the specific loci of the genes that may be involved in susceptibility to alcohol dependence. The Alcohol Research Project is funded by the US National Institutes of Health, and is carried out in

collaboration with Virginia Commonwealth University. The fieldwork for the study commenced in 1997 with six field researchers strategically placed throughout the island recruiting and examining subjects. The study is due to end in January 2003 and, to date, recruitment targets have been exceeded, with 1,474 participants successfully recruited to the study.

**The Irish Schizophrenia Study:** This study aims to investigate possible locations for genetic links in schizophrenia, based on a large body of previous research suggesting a strong genetic component to the familial transmission of schizophrenia. The study is funded by the US National Institute of Mental Health. The research is a collaborative endeavour involving the Virginia Commonwealth University, the Health Research Board and Queen's University Belfast. Fieldwork has been carried out in Northern Ireland, the Eastern Regional Health Authority, the Western, Mid-Western and Southern Health Board areas. At the end of 2002 there were 680 participants recruited successfully to the study. This study is due to end in 2003.

**Needs Assessment and Service Use – Patients with Chronic Schizophrenia:** The clinical and social needs of a sample of 64 patients with chronic schizophrenia in the St Loman's catchment area were assessed using a variety of instruments. This study is being carried out in co-operation with researchers in six other European countries. Results will be published in 2003.

**Mental Illness in Ireland 1750–2001 – The Rise and Fall of Institutional Care in Ireland:** Work continued on this document which is looking at the history of mental illness in Ireland from 1750 to 2001 and, in particular, at the rise of institutionalism and its decline some 250 years later. The document is due for publication in 2003.

## Looking Forward

The five strategic objectives of the MHRD will guide work in 2003. Priorities in relation to NPIRS include ongoing liaison with and provision of training to personnel in health boards involved in the return of NPIRS data. Work will continue with the National Mental Health Performance Indicators to extend computerisation and improve the quality and timeliness of NPIRS returns. The elicitation of the information needs of stakeholders in the mental health area in the health boards will commence. This work will feed into discussions on how best to satisfy these information needs and the implications for the development of the HRB NPIRS and Case Register systems. Quality-control issues in relation to the Case Registers will be prioritised in early 2003 and the future development of these registers will be considered in this context. The research studies on the genetics of schizophrenia and alcohol will close in 2003. The results of the day hospital study will be published, as will a number of academic papers by Division staff.

The Division will continue to collaborate with outside researchers, and staff will provide access to data and interpretations from MHRD databases to researchers in academic and health board settings. Funding is being sought for specific research projects which would commence during 2003.

The MHRD will continue to work to improve communication and dissemination of its activities in accordance with HRB policy and Corporate Strategy, aided by the in-house communications personnel. The release of the 2002 publication *Irish Hospitals and Units Census 2001* received

good publicity in the national and local media. The dissemination in 2002 of NPIRS Bulletins for each health board individually generated considerable local media coverage. This initiative will be continued in 2003.

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# Research and Development for Health Division

## Research and Development for Health Division

The research strategy document *Making Knowledge Work for Health*, published in June 2001, identified the challenge of developing a strong research and development (R&D) culture and function within the health services and highlighted the contribution that R&D could make to efficient and high-quality health policies and interventions. In April 2002, the HRB reorganised to meet the challenge posed by *Making Knowledge Work for Health* with the establishment of a new division, Research and Development for Health. The challenge for this Division in the years ahead is to foster links at a regional and national level between health agencies, the third-level sector, research charities and the healthcare industry to support a strong R&D function in the health services, and to do this on an all-island basis where possible. As set out in the HRB Corporate Strategy, this means being the main advocate for the creation and application of new knowledge for health and social gain and encouraging the emergence of a knowledge-based health system and society.

The Division has a number of core objectives:

1. To assist health agencies to develop institutional research strategies to support the growth of value-added R&D capability in the health system.
2. To promote the translation of research into evidence for decision making (on an all-island and east-west basis where possible).
3. To improve the standards of research management and commissioning of research by health agencies.
4. To develop the potential of the Ireland–Northern Ireland–National Cancer Institute Cancer Consortium to strengthen co-operation on the island of Ireland.
5. To commission research on health issues on behalf of other agencies.

### Achievements in 2002

*Promoting the translation of  
research into evidence for  
decision-making*



The Cochrane Collaboration aims to help people make well-informed decisions by preparing, maintaining and promoting the accessibility of systematic reviews of interventions in all areas of healthcare. *The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*, the main product of the Cochrane Collaboration, now contains the full text of 1,600 completed Cochrane Reviews and 1,200 protocols for reviews in progress. In order to promote use of the Cochrane Library of systematic reviews, free all-Ireland Internet access to the Cochrane Library was negotiated in January 2002, funded jointly by the HRB and the R&D Office in Belfast. All individuals on the island can now access the Library by using the web link <http://www.update-software.com/clibng/cliblogon.htm>.

Three-day training workshops on systematic reviews were held throughout the year in Belfast, Cork, Dublin and Galway. More than 50 people attended these workshops, which were co-funded by HRB and the R&D Office, and the feedback was extremely positive. The interest in attending the workshops was overwhelming and, because the number of people who can attend these small group sessions is limited, there is already a full waiting list for similar workshops in 2003. The UK Cochrane Centre also held 'Protocol Writing' and 'Introduction to Analysis' workshops in Dublin and Belfast during the year.

The HRB and the R&D Office co-funded five Cochrane Fellowships to allow fellows from the island of Ireland to work the equivalent of two days per week for one year on a Cochrane Systematic Review. These five Reviews are expected to be completed in November 2003.

In June 2002, a working group was convened for the launch of the first All-Ireland Cochrane Health Libraries Group Prize. A similar prize was conceived in 1997 in the UK to highlight the contribution that librarians make in promoting the accessibility of reliable research evidence and its use in clinical practice. The All-Ireland Prize (worth 4,750 and co-funded by the HRB and the R&D Office) was launched in Tullamore, Co Offaly in October at the annual conference of the Irish Health Science Librarians Group. The deadline for applications for this prize is August 2003.

Throughout 2002, the HRB took part in meetings of the UK-Ireland Public Health Evidence Group (UKIPHEG) along with the Institute of Public Health in Ireland, the Public Health Institute of Scotland, the Health Development Agency (HAD) in England and representatives from the Wales Health Evidence Bulletins team. This working group was set up to share information and join forces in efforts to establish and develop the evidence base for public health in each country. The HRB and the R&D Office in Belfast have agreed to co-fund a researcher to work with the Institute of Public Health in Ireland to compile an evidence briefing on adolescent para-suicide management and suicide prevention, in collaboration with Best Health for Children. They will be aided in search and review methodology by the Cochrane Collaboration and the HAD. This review represents part of a collaborative programme of work within UKIPHEG, whereby the other members will also complete a series of evidence briefing documents in a large number of agreed areas, such as injuries, coronary heart disease, diabetes, mental health.

As part of the drive to encourage use of the evidence base for decision and policy making, the HRB participated on a committee to organise a conference entitled 'Making Sense of Sellafeld'. The main aim of the conference, which took place at the Royal Irish Academy in September, was to provide an opportunity for scientists to present their data to an invited audience of politicians and policy makers and, where possible, to draw conclusions from their investigations. The conference provided an opportunity to question key scientists on their findings and to engage them on the issues of greatest concern in nuclear policy.

Throughout 2002, the HRB made substantial progress with the commissioning of a report entitled 'Health and Environmental Effects of Landfilling and Incineration of Waste: A Literature Review'. This report, which is being commissioned at the request of the Department of Environment, aims to inform policy makers of (a) the technical aspects of both landfill and incineration practices and (b) the adverse effects that these practices have on the environment and human health. The report is scheduled for publication in early 2003.

### **Ireland - North Ireland - National Cancer Institute Cancer Consortium**

As outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding in 1999, the overarching goal of the Cancer Consortium is to foster the provision of better prevention, early detection, and treatment of cancer for all people on the island of Ireland. A key part of this is enabling people with cancer to gain access to clinical trials. Clinical trials are acknowledged worldwide as the optimal way to advance cancer care at the bedside, ensure uniformity of practice and even lead to changes in practice. Because of the relatively small population on the island, it is essential that the two jurisdictions work with one another and with the United States and other countries in order to create a pool of participants large enough to generate meaningful findings. The establishment of the Consortium represented an opportunity to build on initiatives undertaken by the governments North and South to establish a co-ordinated approach to cancer research on an all-island basis.

In May 2001, the HRB made awards to six hospitals in Ireland, valued at €4.6 million over three years, to enhance the capacity of hospitals to conduct high-quality clinical trials. As a sign of its commitment to this initiative, additional funding was made available by the Department of Health and Children in 2002 to support the next phase of development. A second call for funding to hospitals was issued and six applications were received. After evaluation by an international panel of experts in Dublin in June, awards were made to St James's Hospital and to the Mater Misericordiae Hospital in Dublin. Two smaller planning grants were awarded to the Adelaide and Meath, incorporating the National Children's Hospital (AMNCH), in Tallaght and Waterford Regional Hospital. Funding for the second call amounts to approximately €3 million over three years. Simultaneously, the Northern Ireland Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety continued in its effort to restructure cancer services to enhance its clinical research capabilities. A major cancer unit has been developed at Belfast City Hospital and this will serve as the co-ordinating hub for activities at the cancer units of the four regional health boards.

In order to reap the dividends of the funding awarded to hospitals across the island, the Consortium made significant progress in 2002 in establishing a network similar to that of NCI Co-operative Groups. The Irish Clinical Oncology Research Group (ICORG) in Dublin and the newly established Clinical Research Support Centre (CRSC) in Belfast submitted a collaborative application to form an All-Ireland Co-operative Group and this was reviewed by an international panel of experts in June. A planning grant of 500,000 over two years to each organisation was recommended by the expert panel and this was linked firmly to reviewing progress against milestones at nine- and eighteen-month intervals. Further details and the official launch of the Group are expected in early 2003. The All-Ireland Co-operative Group will be jointly funded by the HRB and the R&D Office and will be responsible for the generation and conduct of cancer clinical trials consistent with the priorities on the island and for the provision of organisational, statistical and scientific support to member hospitals. Group headquarters will be in Dublin, while data management and statistical functions will be provided by the CRSC in Belfast.

Developing a cadre of well-trained cancer research specialists on the island is a key goal of the Consortium. During 2002, through its scholar exchange programme, the Consortium facilitated the exchange of a number of oncologists, nurses, researchers and other cancer personnel between their home institutions in Ireland and the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, Maryland. Funding for travel, accommodation and salary or stipend was provided by the HRB for participants from the South and on-site training costs were provided by NCI.

Two clinical oncology nurses from the South completed the three-month clinical trials training programme in April 2002. The nurses rotated between the NCI Clinical Centre and the National Naval Medical Centre in Bethesda. Sarah Condell took up a part-time position with the HRB in June 2002 to advise and co-ordinate HRB nursing and midwifery research schemes and to work with this Division on Cancer Consortium nursing initiatives

The first Consortium epidemiology fellow from the South, Dr Paul Walsh, concluded his first year of post-doctoral study in cancer epidemiology in NCI and returned to the National Cancer Registry in Cork for the remaining two years of the fellowship. Dr Walsh is developing a project on breast cancer survival with the Registry as part of the overarching goal of translating the fellows' experiences into cancer research projects on the island. A second call for epidemiology fellows was issued in October 2002 and it is anticipated that the HRB will fund another fellow to travel to NCI in 2003.

The HRB funded 15 individuals to attend NCI's Summer Curriculum in Cancer Prevention during July and August. Some attended a four-week segment entitled 'The Principles and Practices of Cancer Prevention and Control', some attended a one-week segment entitled 'Molecular Prevention', and some individuals attended both. The Principles and Practices course covers the resources, data, methods and theories related to cancer prevention and control. The Molecular Prevention course provides participants with information on molecular biology and the genetics of cancer and an overview of the laboratory approaches in epidemiology, bio-nutrition, chemoprevention, biomarkers and translational research. A reunion was held for the 16 participants from 2001 and the returned 2002 participants to coincide with the Cancer Care Conference in Belfast in October.

The first meeting of the Prevention Working Group was held in Dublin in May 2002. Members discussed prevention activities in their respective jurisdictions and began to formulate initiatives that could be undertaken by the Consortium, such as the hosting of workshops addressing those cancers that utilise the greatest amount of resources or that have the highest rates of morbidity or mortality on the island.

A highlight for all involved in the Consortium in Ireland was the visit in November by Dr Elias Zerhouni, Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and Dr Andy Van Eschenbach, Director of the National Cancer Institute, to launch the TeleSynergy™ suite at St Lukes Hospital. The visit provided an opportunity to raise the profile of the work of the Cancer Consortium and has opened up other opportunities for co-operation with the NIH on an all-island basis.

Further details on current and planned Consortium activities can be found on the Cancer Consortium website at [www.allirelandnci.org](http://www.allirelandnci.org)

## Looking forward

The Division will continue to advance the strategic vision of the HRB in implementing the recommendations of *Making Knowledge Work for Health* in relation to R&D for Health. A series of workshops and seminars to assist health agencies to develop research strategies will begin in 2003 to support the growth of value-added R&D capability in the health system. Work will also begin on preparing and issuing guidance and advice to improve the standards of research management and the commissioning of research by health agencies. An additional senior member of staff will be engaged to work on these initiatives.

## Staff of the Division

Teresa Maguire PhD, Head of Division  
Bronagh O' Connor

Finance and Administration  
Division

## Finance and Administration Division

The role of the Corporate Services Division is to equip the HRB with the necessary corporate governance practices, resources, skills, competencies and internal support structures and systems to achieve its corporate objectives.

The Divisional objectives are:

- To support the effective working of the Board and its committees, and facilitate the Board's programme of promoting continued good corporate governance.
- To develop and implement systems, policies, and procedures that ensure the most effective and efficient use of the HRB's financial resources to enable it to achieve its corporate objectives.
- To provide the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) capability required to facilitate effective and flexible work practices and the efficient delivery of services to the HRB's clients.
- To facilitate the enhanced performance of the organisation by the provision of adequate office accommodation, reception cover, facilities management and other support services.

### Achievements in 2002

#### **Finance**

The total income of the HRB for 2002 was €22.8 million (up from €15.3 million in the previous year), an increase of 49 per cent. Total income for 2002 was made up of revenue income of €20.9 million and capital income of €1.9 million. Funding received from the Department of Health and Children accounted for 88 per cent of total income.

Expenditure by the Research Funding and Policy Division on research grants and fellowships increased by €3.4 million to €14.2 million. The Research and Development for Health Division was established during the year and its expenditure of €2.6 million was focused on awarding funding under the Ireland–Northern Ireland–National Cancer Institute schemes.

US-sponsored intramural research activities in the Child Health Epidemiology Division and the Mental Health Research Division, and EU-sponsored research in the Drug Misuse Research Division continued to be the main categories of other research expenditure, which increased by 35 per cent to €2.6 million in 2002.

The result for the year was a surplus of €16,749.

Martina Sheridan, a qualified Chartered Accountant, was recruited to the post of Management Accountant in May, and the first in a series of audits of research institutions was successfully completed.

### **Buildings, facilities and other services**

Eyre Massy, a qualified engineer, was recruited to the post of Facilities Manager in January; his remit also covers the areas of ICT and health and safety.

In the first quarter of the year new accommodation was identified in Holbrook House that met the office space requirements of the HRB, had disabled access and suitable facilities for the National Documentation Centre on Drug Misuse. The terms of the lease were successfully negotiated, optimal use of the new office space agreed, and staff moved to their new locations with minimal business disruption. The health, safety, and welfare of all staff were treated as a priority at all times during the move.

Tenders for the refurbishment of the Baggot Street offices were received and the contract was successfully negotiated and work commenced. A project team was established to ensure that the financial and other obligations of the contract were adhered to.

HRB office opening hours for public access were increased by two hours and fifteen minutes each day. Carole Marry and Bronagh O'Connor were appointed to the posts of Receptionist/Administrators.

Sadly, in February 2002 we learnt of the death of Leo Johnson, the HRB's long-serving Porter/Services Officer. This vacancy was filled in April by the appointment of Francis Pedreschi.

Bronagh O'Connor left the Corporate Services Division in December 2002 to join the Research and Development for Health Division.

### **Information and communications technology**

In conjunction with the opening of the Holles Street office and the temporary vacating of the Baggot Street office, the ICT capacity of the HRB was reviewed and enhanced. Internet access was upgraded to a 2MB leased line with connection directly to HEAnet as well as a 2MB link between the two HRB offices.

Following a detailed review of requirements, PC operating systems in use in the HRB were upgraded and e-mail services, on which the HRB is very reliant, were extensively upgraded and modernised.

Access for teleworkers and other remote users was enabled and facilitated by upgrading the security and access software and hardware.

## Looking Forward

In 2003 the Corporate Services Division will facilitate the establishment of an internal audit function, prepare detailed policies and procedures for the working of the HRB's internal Research Ethics Committee, develop corporate record-management policies and ensure that the HRB can meet the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act in advance of its implementation in the HRB.

The refurbishment of the Baggot Street premises will be completed on time and within the agreed budget.

## Staff of the Division

Carol Cronin BComm FCA, Secretary to the Board, Head of Division

Ashling Dwyer

David Flood

Carole Marry

Eyre Massey BSc(Eng) DipEng MIEI

Bronagh O'Connor

Francis Pedreschi

Yvonne Russell

Martina Sheridan ACA

# Accounts

## Health Research Board

### Revenue Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 December 2002

	2002 €	2001 €
<b>Income</b>		
Department of Health and Children Revenue Grant	13,008,000	10,714,050
Other Research Funding	2,625,765	1,946,270
Projects Undertaken for the Department of Health and Children	5,240,893	2,179,260
Interest Receivable	75,745	725
	<b>20,950,403</b>	<b>14,869,594</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Research Grants and Fellowships	12,942,743	10,383,035
Child Health Epidemiology Division	1,095,539	984,300
Drug Misuse Research Division	639,973	545,114
Mental Health Research Division	1,148,690	866,220
Disability Databases Division	222,413	164,608
Research and Development for Health Division	2,622,762	-
Administration Costs and General Overheads	2,134,934	1,700,504
Pensions Paid to Retired Members of Staff	47,811	62,180
Other Activities	78,788	188,958
	<b>20,933,654</b>	<b>14,894,919</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year</b>	<b>16,749</b>	<b>(25,325)</b>

Health Research Board

**Capital Income and Expenditure Account  
for the year ended 31 December 2002**

	<b>2002</b> €	<b>2001</b> €
<b>Income</b>		
Department of Health and Children Capital Grant	<b>1,882,073</b>	444,485
Amortisation of Capital Fund Account	<b>132,734</b>	101,293
	<b>2,014,807</b>	545,778
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Equipment Grants Paid to Third Parties	<b>1,251,740</b>	365,406
Contribution to Fixed Assets	<b>279,834</b>	79,079
Contribution to Premises Upgrading	<b>350,499</b>	-
Depreciation	<b>132,734</b>	101,293
	<b>2,014,807</b>	545,778
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year</b>	-	-

## Health Research Board

### Balance Sheet

for the year ended 31 December 2002

	2002 €	2001 €
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Tangible Assets	545,803	398,703
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Debtors	1,917,133	935,843
Investments	641	445,960
Cash at Bank and on Hand	2,610,245	2,623,805
	<b>4,528,019</b>	<b>4,005,608</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
<i>Amounts falling due within one year:</i>		
Bank and Other Advances	527,196	36,278
Creditors and Deferred Income	3,930,475	3,915,731
	<b>4,457,671</b>	<b>3,952,009</b>
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b>70,348</b>	<b>53,599</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>616,151</b>	<b>452,302</b>
<b>Reserves</b>		
Accumulated Surplus on Income and Expenditure Account	70,348	53,599
Capital Fund	545,803	398,703
	<b>616,151</b>	<b>452,302</b>

# Appendices I & II

# Appendix I

## HRB Grants Awarded in 2002

### Fellowships – Clinical Research Training

<b>Grant Holder</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award</b>
Dr Zainab Abood Trinity Centre for Health Science St James's Hospital	An investigation of the genetic relationship between depression and migraine	€126,470
Dr Susan Connolly Department of Medicine and Therapeutics UCD/Mater Misericordiae Hospital	Identification of molecular drivers and novel therapeutic targets in diabetic atherosclerosis through complementary analysis of differential gene expression in vascular smooth muscle cells	€124,670
Dr Vincent Dolan Department of Pharmacology University College Dublin	Analysis of the expression and function of Gremlin in the developing vertebrate kidney	€136,923
Dr Stephen Finn Department of Histopathology AMNCH	Genome wide investigation of Thyroid Neoplasia	€123,454
Dr Fidelma Fitzpatrick Department of Microbiology Beaumont Hospital	Will a greater understanding of the factors that influence adherence to biomaterials and biofilm formation by coagulase-negative staphylococci lead to better therapeutic and preventive measures in neurosurgical infections?	€122,987
Dr Thomas Flannery Department of Oncology QUB/Belfast City Hospital	Cathepsin S expression in astrocytomas: clinical relevance and role in invasion	€61,081
Dr Trevor Markham Dermatology Department St Vincent's University Hospital	Angiogenic growth factors in psoriasis and the effect of anti-TNF $\alpha$ blockade	€129,638
Dr Conor O'Brien Education and Research Centre St Vincent's University Hospital	Cytokine gene polymorphisms and their association with the outcome of Hepatitis C viral infection	€89,510

<b>Grant Holder</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award</b>
Dr Donal O’Croinin Department of Physiology University College Dublin	Investigation of the effects of Hypercapnic Acidosis on acute lung injury induced by bacterial infection	€123,454
Dr Sunita Sukumaran Neurology Department Beaumont Hospital	Is Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy a useful marker of dynamic hippocampal changes? Assessment of correlates with memory training in patients who have undergone hippocampectomy for intractable temporal lobe epilepsy	€120,698

#### Fellowships – Health Services Research

<b>Grant Holder</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award</b>
Mr Paul Cahill Psychology Department University of Ulster	A multivariate analysis of the influences and profiles of treated drug misuse in Ireland	€113,655
Ms Catherine Dineen Neuropsychology Department Beaumont Hospital	Assessing the effectiveness of a novel cognitive behavior therapy treatment for patients with non-epileptic seizures (NES) compared with standard psychiatry treatment	€44,896
Ms Jean Long Department of Community Health and General Practice AMNCH	‘Unknown’ socio-economic status in national databases: a socially excluded underclass?	€136,611
Dr Anne MacFarlane Department of General Practice NUI Galway	Health service delivery in multi-cultural Ireland: perceptions of refugees, asylum seekers and primary healthcare providers	€147,521
Ms Rosemary O’Halpin Cochlear Implant Programme Beaumont Hospital	The effects of cochlear implantation on speech perception and production skills in children in Ireland	€147,521

#### Fellowships – Nursing and Midwifery Research

<b>Grant Holder</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award</b>
Ms Claire Coleman Guide Clinic St James’s Hospital	An exploration of the acceptability and effectiveness of contact tracing in the context of an outbreak of syphilis	€92,193
Ms Gabrielle O’Kelly	The impact of nursing experiences on nurses’ unconscious mental processes	€140,511

## Fellowships – Post-Doctoral

<b>Grant Holder</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award</b>
Dr Miriam Brady Department of Biochemistry Trinity College Dublin	Role of regulatory T-cells in parasite immunosuppression	€163,021
Dr Lorraine Brennan Department of Biochemistry University College Dublin	Assessment of cell metabolism and function using Nuclear Magnetic Resonance	€162,921
Dr Katrina Comerford Department of Medicine and Therapeutics Mater Misericordiae Hospital	Hypoxia-elicited P-glycoprotein expression: potential role in chemotherapeutic resistance	€163,021
Dr Andrew Harkin Department of Pharmacology NUI Galway	A study of the mechanisms by which caffeine increases the acute toxicity of methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA, 'Ecstasy')	€170,021
Dr Jean-Marc Hyvelin Department of Physiology University College Dublin	The role of Rho/Rho-kinase in the pulmonary vascular remodelling in chronically hypoxic lungs	€169,441
Dr Aileen Lynch Department of Physiology Trinity College Dublin	What cellular events are responsible for the age-related deterioration in synaptic function in the rat hippocampus?	€163,021
Dr James McRedmond Department of Clinical Pharmacology Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	Transcriptome and proteome analysis of platelet phosphoproteins	€166,546
Dr Sarah O'Neill Department of Clinical Pharmacology Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	An investigation of the mechanisms of integrin activation	€156,953

## Programme Grants

<b>Grant Holder</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award</b>
Professor Hugh Brady Department of Medicine and Therapeutics UCD/Mater Misericordiae Hospital	Functional and computational genomics approach to the identification of novel therapeutic targets in diabetic nephropathy	€1,088,488

<b>Grant Holder</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award</b>
Professor Desmond Fitzgerald Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	Programme on cell regulation by cyclooxygenases: novel therapeutic targets in cancer inflammation	€1,100,000
Professor Timothy Foster Microbiology Department Trinity College Dublin	The molecular basis of the interaction of Staphylococci with platelets and the pathogenesis of invasive and device-related infections	€1,047,915
Dr Catherine Godson Department of Medicine and Therapeutics University College Dublin	Mechanisms of action and therapeutic potential of lipoxins in renal disease	€600,000
Professor Peter Humphries The Ocular Genetics Unit Trinity College Dublin	Exploration of therapeutic interventions at the genetic level in degenerative diseases of the retina	€1,088,499
Professor Dermot Kelleher Department of Clinical Medicine/ Molecular Medicine Centre St James's Hospital	Toll-like receptors in human disease	€1,087,809
Professor Dermot Kenny Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	The platelet as a potential therapeutic paradigm	€1,114,000
Professor Noel Lowndes Department of Biochemistry NUI Galway	The DNA damage checkpoint and cancer	€1,133,006
Professor Hannah McGee Department of Psychology Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	Maximising quality at the interface between individuals and the healthcare system	€821,959
Professor Andrew Murphy Department of General Practice NUI Galway	Secondary prevention of heart disease in general practice: a randomised controlled trial with qualitative, economic and policy analyses of an intervention to produce improved and sustained outcomes	€1,075,750

<b>Grant Holder</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award</b>
Professor Brian Nolan Economic and Social Research Institute	The provision and use of health services: health inequalities and health and social gain	€632,501
Professor Denis O'Mullane Oral Health Research Centre University College Cork	The benefits and risks of fluoride on the island of Ireland	€570,553
Professor Anne Scott School of Nursing Dublin City University	Nursing decision making: an integrated programme of research to maximise the effectiveness of clinical nursing resources	€999,994
Professor Fergus Shanahan Department of Medicine Cork University Hospital	Host-bacterial interactions within the gut in health and disease	€567,000

#### Research Project Grants – Co-Funded in Health Services Research

<b>Grant Holder</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award</b>
Professor PJ Kearney Department of Paediatrics Cork University Hospital	Does the distance from paediatric oncology centres affect the quality of life of children on cancer chemotherapy?	€19,675
Dr Regina McQuillan St Francis Hospice	The relationship between the traveller community and specialist palliative care services in the Eastern Regional Health Authority	€19,289
Mrs Victoria Ononeze Department of General Practice NUI Galway	A qualitative study of the individual experience of coronary heart disease in the wider context of social, cultural and environmental factors	€20,000
Dr Jane Walsh Department of Psychology NUI Galway	An evaluation of an intervention to improve attendance rates for cervical screening: the impact of biopsychosocial factors on the formation of implementation intentions	€13,873

#### Research Project Grants – General

<b>Grant Holder</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award</b>
Professor Gregory Julian Atkins Department of Microbiology Trinity College Dublin	Biosafety of the Semliki Forest virus vector: abrogation of virus-induced demyelination	€97,724

<b>Grant Holder</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award</b>
Dr Michael Barry Department of Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics Trinity College Dublin	The cost effectiveness of three antiretroviral drug regimens for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV disease	€145,351
Dr Kathleen Bennett National Medicines Information Centre St James's Hospital	Influence of deprivation and geographical region on prescribing patterns	€128,250
Professor Hugh Brady Department of Medicine and Therapeutics Mater Misericordiae Hospital	Molecular mechanisms of tubulointerstitial fibrosis in diabetic nephropathy	€159,018
Dr David Brayden Department of Small Animal Clinical Studies University College Dublin	Myosin light chain kinase inhibitors as potential therapeutics for inflammatory bowel disease	€126,470
Dr Geraldine Butler Department of Biochemistry University College Dublin	Genomic analysis of the transcriptional response of human macrophage cells to infection with the pathogenic yeast <i>Candida albicans</i>	€142,200
Dr John Calvin Coffey Department of Academic Surgery Cork University Hospital	On the TRAIL to periperative tumour growth: an evaluation of TRAIL mediated apoptosis following surgery	€69,600
Dr Michael P Carty Department of Biochemistry NUI Galway	Analysis of polymorphisms and mutations in the human RAD30 cancer susceptibility gene	€144,464
Professor David C Coleman Department of Oral Surgery, Oral Medicine and Oral Pathology Trinity College Dublin	Triclosan-based antagonism of the activity of azole antifungal drugs against oral <i>Candida</i> species	€152,274
Dr Sean Commins Department of Psychology NUI Maynooth	Neurophysiology and neuroanatomy of hippocampal-cortical interaction: the role of the subiculum and entorhinal cortex	€139,200

<b>Grant Holder</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award</b>
Professor Kenneth A Dawson Department of Chemistry University College Dublin	Determination of factors controlling biocompatibility	€140,500
Professor Kevin Devine Department of Genetics Trinity College Dublin	Investigation of the essential two-component system YycFg in Staphylococcus aureus, to establish its potential as a novel therapeutic target	€150,147
Professor Timothy G Dinan Department of Pharmacology and Therapeutics Cork University Hospital	Overactivation of hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis in melancholic depression: studies on the role of Vasopressin	€154,057
Dr MJ Duffy Department of Nuclear Medicine St Vincent's University Hospital	Role of ADAMs in breast cancer	€107,600
Dr Gwyneth Jane Farrar Department of Genetics Trinity College Dublin	Exploration of ribozyme-based suppression of thyrotropin-releasing hormone-degrading ectoenzyme (TRH-DE) gene expression as a novel therapeutic approach for CNS injury	€106,500
Professor Desmond Fitzgerald Department of Pharmacology Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	Cyclooxygenases in hypoxia-induced pulmonary hypertension	€157,178
Professor Timothy Foster Department of Microbiology Trinity College Dublin	Adherence of Staphylococcus aureus to elastin is promoted by the fibronectin binding proteins	€104,817
Dr Louise Gallagher Department of Genetics Trinity College Dublin	Using a deletion within the autism-linked region on chromosome 2 as a tool to map the gene(s)	€164,633
Dr Clair M Gardiner Department of Biochemistry Trinity College Dublin	Investigation of the functional polymorphism of KIR 3DL1 receptor expressed by NK cells	€170,850
Professor Michael Gill Department of Psychiatry Trinity College Dublin	A prospective study of the clinical genetics of methylphenidate response in children with ADHD	€140,049

<b>Grant Holder</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award</b>
Dr Catherine Godson Department of Medicine and Therapeutics University College Dublin	An investigation of the potential antifibrotic actions of lipoxins in renal cells	€160,760
Professor Ian Graham Department of Cardiology AMNCH	The role of endogenous arginine derivatives in atherosclerotic vascular disease	€118,586
Dr Ziarih Hawi Department of Genetics Trinity College Dublin	Linkage disequilibrium mapping and mutation analysis of serotonergic candidate genes in Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	€119,500
Dr Desmond Higgins Department of Biochemistry University College Cork	Computer-aided cancer identification from gene expression profile data	€167,820
Dr Alan K Keenan Department of Pharmacology University College Dublin	Adaptation of environment-sensitive hydrogels to local delivery of potential anti-retinosis therapy	€170,806
Dr Alan Kelly Department of Community Health and General Practice AMNCH	Access for all: a formal methodology for quantifying and planning access to health services in Ireland	€71,224
Dr B Therese Kinsella Department of Biochemistry University College Dublin	Investigation of the role of the calcium (Ca)-dependent and the Ca-independent/Rho A pathways in thromboxane receptor (TP) signalling within the vasculature	€157,806
Professor Brian Lawlor Mercer's Institute for Research on Ageing St James's Hospital	The role of haemochromatosis mutations in Alzheimer's disease	€54,086
Dr Aideen Long Department of Biochemistry Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	Transcriptional regulation of protein Kinase C isoforms in response to T cell activation	€158,934
Professor Noel F Lowndes Department of Biochemistry NUI Galway	Biochemistry of the Brca1 tumour suppressor	€153,728

<b>Grant Holder</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award</b>
Dr John P Lowry Department of Chemistry NUI Maynooth	The role of astrocytes in brain energy metabolism	€121,046
Dr Padraic Mac Mathuna Gastrointestinal Unit Mater Misericordiae Hospital	Development of a model colorectal cancer screening clinic	€146,311
Dr John James Mackrill Department of Biochemistry University College Cork	Relationships between hypoxia and Ca signalling in a human neuroblastoma cell line	€105,500
Professor Finian Martin Department of Pharmacology University College Dublin	Functional and morphological maintenance of mammary epithelial structures by the combined action of extracellular matrix components and glucocorticoids: studies on a novel cell culture model system	€153,000
Dr Kieran McDermott Department of Anatomy University College Cork	Astroglial diversity and selective dopaminergic neuronal degeneration: implications for Parkinson's disease	€103,200
Professor TJ McKenna Department of Endocrinology St Vincent's University Hospital	Structure and etiology of macroprolactin	€109,900
Professor P McLoughlin Department of Physiology University College Dublin	Angiogenesis in the pulmonary circulation: pathogenetic role in chronic lung infection	€124,200
Dr Hilary McMahon Department of Industrial Microbiology University College Dublin	The prion protein's role in the cellular oxidative state	€138,366
Dr Anthony Moran Department of Microbiology NUI Galway	Characterisation of the capsular and exopolysaccharides of <i>Campylobacter jejuni</i> and <i>Campylobacter coli</i> and studies on their biological relevance	€150,654
Professor John Morrison Clinical Science Institute NUI Galway	The Rho/Rho-kinase system and regulation of maternal, placental and fetal vascular smooth muscle in normal pregnancy, pre-eclampsia and fetal growth restriction	€103,315

<b>Grant Holder</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award</b>
Dr Paul Moynagh Department of Pharmacology University College Dublin	Exploring the role of PRISM in inflammatory signalling pathways	€151,000
Dr Philip Newsholme Department of Biochemistry University College Dublin	Nutrient, hormone and sulphonylurea regulation of metabolic/secretory pathway activity and gene expression in pancreatic beta cells: use of expression profiling and NMR to probe beta cell function	€149,000
Dr Catherine M Nolan Department of Zoology University College Dublin	Is translation of the IGF-I receptor coding sequence negatively regulated by an upstream open reading frame?	€107,400
Professor Timothy O'Brien University College Hospital Galway	A gene therapy approach to atherosclerosis by paraoxonase gene transfer	€149,468
Dr Joe O'Connell Department of Medicine Cork University Hospital	Role of Fas ligand (FasL/CD95L) in metastatic colonisation of the liver by colon cancer cells	€155,652
Professor Brian O'Connell Department of Restorative Dentistry Trinity College Dublin	Antifungal mechanism of human salivary histatin-identification and characterisation of molecular targets	€162,099
Dr Rosemary O'Connor Department of Biochemistry University College Cork	Role of RACK-1 and Serine phosphorylation in IR/IGF-1R function	€155,837
Dr Kay Ohlendieck Department of Pharmacology University College Dublin	Proteomics analysis of adult skeletal muscle fibre transformation: a neurobiological model system of electro-stimulation therapy	€150,000
Professor Denis O'Mullane Oral Health Services Research Centre Cork University Hospital	A study of the relationship among oral hygiene habits, salivary fluoride levels and dental caries	€155,085
Professor Luke O'Neill Department of Biochemistry Trinity College	Signal transduction pathways activated by the novel adapter protein Mal (MyD88 adapter-like), a critical participant in Toll-like receptor-4 action	€158,535

<b>Grant Holder</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award</b>
Dr Cora O'Neill Department of Biochemistry University College Cork	Characterisation of beta-site amyloid precursor protein cleaving enzyme (BACE) in Alzheimer's disease brain	€100,490
Dr Finbarr O'Sullivan Department of Statistics University College Cork	Statistical methods for quantitative imaging with positron emission tomography	€157,429
Dr Dmitri B Papkovsky Department of Biochemistry University College Cork	Respirometric biochip and system for embryo assessment	€154,700
Professor Ivan Perry Department of Epidemiology and Public Health University College Cork	The Diabetes QoL Study: determinants of quality of life in Irish patients with diabetes	€124,444
Professor Denis J Reen Children's Research Centre Our Lady's Hospital for Sick Children	Regulation of monocyte responses by apoptotic cells	€134,562
Dr Aideen Sullivan Department of Anatomy University College Cork	Establishment of neurotrophin-expressing dopaminergic cells for transplantation in Parkinson's disease	€131,900
Dr Clifford Taggart Department of Medicine Beaumont Hospital	Inhibition of the ubiquitin-proteasome pathway by secretory leucoprotease inhibitor	€60,000
Dr Olga N Tucker Department of Surgery Cork University Hospital	The role of the arachidonic acid metabolic pathway in pancreatic cancer	€115,310
Dr Dermot Walls School of Biotechnology Dublin City University	bfl-1/A1, a target for the Epstein-Barr virus LMP1, EBNA2 and related cell signalling pathway	€156,635
Dr Helen Whelton Oral Health Services Research Centre University Dental School	Economic modelling of services utilisation data and epidemiological data for oral health services	€155,000

### Research Project Grants – Inter-Disciplinary

<b>Grant Holder</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award</b>
Dr Clare Meaney School of Pharmacy Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	Synthesis, formulation and evaluation of novel treatments for accelerating wound repair	€128,315
Professor Keith Tipton Department of Biochemistry Trinity College Dublin	Exploiting chemical libraries, structural analysis and biological testing to design thyrotropin-releasing hormone-degrading ectoenzyme (TRH-DE) inhibitors for use in the treatment of CNS disorders	€130,000

### Research Project Grants – Ireland–Northern Ireland Co-operation

<b>Grant Holder</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award</b>
Professor Oliver Fitzgerald Department of Rheumatology St Vincent's University Hospital	The consistency of eligibility and monitoring decisions among rheumatologists using anti-TNF alpha therapy in adults with rheumatoid arthritis	€15,655
Dr Orla Hardiman Department of Neurology Beaumont Hospital	An all-Ireland study of the epidemiology, clinical features and services for people with motor neuron disease	€150,500
Professor Timothy O'Brien Department of Medicine NUI Galway	Targeting of inducible nitric oxide synthase (iNOS) gene therapy to tumours by systemic delivery using modified adenoviral vectors	€163,222
Professor Colm O'Brien Institute of Ophthalmology UCD/Mater Misericordiae Hospital	Molecular mechanisms of retinal pericyte apoptosis in diabetic retinopathy	€129,729

## Appendix II

### Research and Development for Health Awards 2002

#### Cochrane Fellowships (co-funded with the R&D Office, Belfast)

<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Title of Review</b>
Dr Paul Beirne	University Dental School and Hospital Cork	Frequency of examination and scaling and polishing for maintaining oral health in adults
Dr Jim Jamison	Research Affiliate Queen's University of Belfast	Antibiotic management of urinary tract problems in people with spinal injury
Dr Alan Moss	Gastroenterology Unit Mater Misericordiae Hospital Dublin	Palliative stents for pancreatic cancer
Dr Emma McCall	School of Medicine Queen's University of Belfast	Plastic barriers for the reduction of heat loss in pre-term infants immediately after birth
Dr Judy Bradley	School of Rehabilitation Sciences University of Ulster at Jordanstown	Effectiveness of short-term ambulatory oxygen for obstructive pulmonary disease

#### Cancer Consortium Clinical Trials Training for Nurses

<b>Name</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Institution</b>
Ms Marie Cox	Clinical Nurse Specialist (Oncology)	University College Hospital Galway
Ms Louise Sherwin	Staff Nurse	St Luke's Hospital Dublin

#### Cancer Consortium Summer Curriculum in Cancer Prevention

<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Course Attended</b>
<b>Discipline</b> Piaras O' Lorcaín Surveillance Scientist	Department of Public Health Eastern Regional Health Authority	Principles and practices of cancer prevention and control
Sinead O'Toole College Lecturer	School of Nursing and Midwifery University College Dublin	Principles and practices of cancer prevention and control
Eileen Nolan Cancer Register Project Officer	HOPE Directorate St James's Hospital	Principles and practices of cancer prevention and control

<b>Name Discipline</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Course Attended</b>
Irene Graham Nurse Tutor	School of Nursing and Midwifery Sligo General Hospital	Principles and practices of cancer prevention and control
Sandra Deady Data Analyst	National Cancer Registry	Principles and practices of cancer prevention and control
Zoë Kelly PhD Student	Department of Pharmacology University College Dublin	Molecular prevention
John V Reynolds Professor of Surgery Head of Department	Department of Clinical Surgery St James's Hospital	Molecular prevention
Helen Barrett Pathology Registrar	Beaumont Hospital	Molecular prevention
Helen Lambkin Lecturer	School of Biological Sciences Dublin Institute of Technology	Molecular prevention
Mark Lawlor Chief Molecular Geneticist	Cancer Strategy Group St James's Hospital	Molecular prevention
Michael Cairns Group Leader Molecular Biology Group	National Diagnostics Centre National University of Ireland Galway	Molecular prevention
Mirellie Crampe Clinical Scientist	Cancer Molecular Diagnosis St James's Hospital	Principles and practices of cancer prevention and control; Molecular prevention
Eilis Foran PhD Student	Biochemistry Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	Principles and practices of cancer prevention and control; Molecular prevention
Sajid Durrani Registrar	Medical Oncology University College Galway	Principles and practices of cancer prevention and control; Molecular prevention
Colm O'Morain Consultant Physician / Gastroenterologist	Department of Gastroenterology Adelaide/ Meath Hospitals	Principles and practices of cancer prevention and control; Molecular prevention

### Cancer Consortium Clinical Trials Hospital Network

Infrastructure awards to hospitals to build capacity to conduct cancer clinical trials

#### Hospital

St Luke's Hospital and  
St Vincent's University Hospital Dublin

Cork University Hospital

Beaumont Hospital Dublin

University College Hospital Galway

Mid Western Regional Hospital Limerick

Mater Misericordiae Hospital Dublin

St James's Hospital Dublin

Tallaght (AMNCH) Hospital Dublin

Waterford Regional Hospital

#### Principal Investigators

Dr John Armstrong and Dr John Crown

Dr Oscar Breathnach and Dr Seamus O' Reilly

Dr Liam Grogan

Dr Macon Keane and Professor Ernest Egan

Dr Maeve Leahy and Dr Seamus O'Reilly

Dr John McCaffrey and Dr Desmond Kearney

Dr John Kennedy and Professor John Reynolds

Dr Diarmuid O' Riordain and Dr Eileen O'Reilly

Dr Paula Calvert and Dr Brian Cantwell

### Cancer Consortium All Ireland Cooperative Group (AICG) Award

A two-year planning grant of €1 million was awarded to ICORG and CRSC to co-ordinate the headquarters and statistical and data management functions of the hospital network.

#### Irish Clinical Oncology Research Group (ICORG)

Dr John Armstrong, Chairman  
120 Pembroke Road  
Dublin

#### Clinical Research Support Centre (CRSC)

Dr Karen Bailie, Director  
Clinical Research Support Centre  
Royal Group of Hospitals  
Belfast

## Notes

## Notes

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