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# Living the LIFE: Shifting the focus from the regions to the COVID-19 health system response: co-producing evidence to inform Sláintecare's implementation

Dr Sara Burke, Research Assistant Professor, Centre for Health Policy and Management, Trinity College Dublin

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## Evidence to inform health system change in the public interest

Work has begun on a new Health Research Board funded project that will help guide the design and roll-out of the new Regional Integrated Care Areas (RICAs) announced by Minister Simon Harris in July 2019.

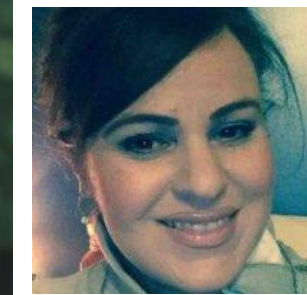
This is one of six new awards that the HRB is funding under its Applied Partnership Award Programme.

According to Dr Darrin Morrissey, Chief Executive at the HRB,





# The Foundations' 'team'



# Where Foundations had got to by February 2020

- Project up & running, ethics secured
- Good progress on a specific piece of work led by Dr Sarah Barry **‘What and how can we learn from service reorganisation in the Irish Health and Social Care System from 1998 to 2020?’** including a rapid review and primary research
- Work begun on rapid reviews on ‘Resource allocation based on population health profiling’ & scoping another on data
- Documenting the policy process including participant observation, ongoing discussions & dialogue with key partners (Joint HSE/Dept of Health and SIPO regions team)
- Building the LIFE: co-producing research and evidence that feeds into real work implementation



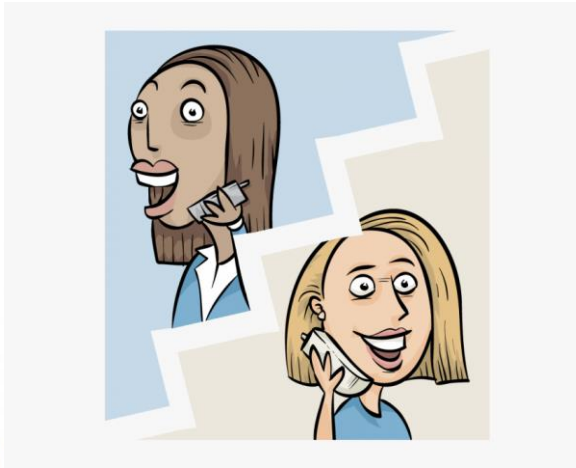
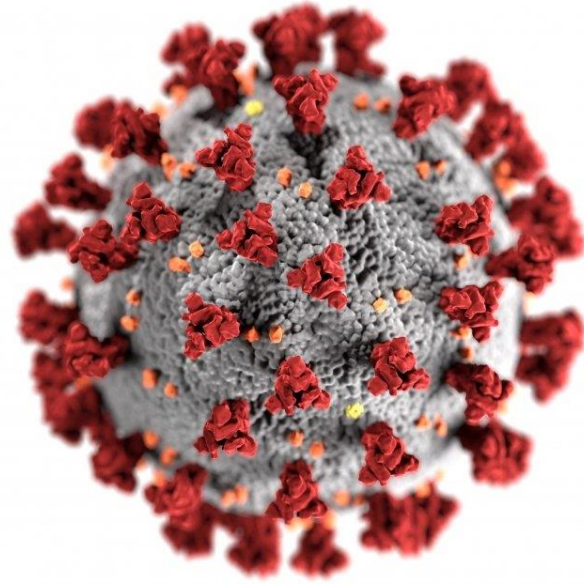


## And then there was COVID-19....

The research topic & policy process was put on hold

There was a unique opportunity to research the COVID-19 health system response

- Ireland
- Internationally





# Negotiated to shift focus to capture learning from COVID-19



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STUDY PROTOCOL

### Health system foundations for Sláintecare implementation in 2020 and beyond – co-producing a Sláintecare Living Implementation Framework with Evaluation: Learning from the Irish health system's response to COVID-19. A mixed-methods study protocol [version 1; peer review: 1 approved]

[✉ Sara Burke](#) [ID](#)<sup>1</sup>, [Steve Thomas](#) [ID](#)<sup>1</sup>, [Malgorzata Stach](#)<sup>1</sup>, [Paul Kavanagh](#)<sup>2</sup>, [Laura Magahy](#)<sup>3</sup>, [Bridget Johnston](#)<sup>1</sup>, [Sarah Barry](#) [ID](#)<sup>1</sup>

[+ Author details](#)

#### Abstract

All over the world, health systems are responding to the major shock of the COVID-19 pandemic. The virus is causing urgent and fast-paced change in the delivery of health and social care as well as highlighting pre-existing deficiencies and inequalities in the health system and broader society. In Ireland, COVID-19 is occurring during the second full year of Sláintecare's implementation – Ireland's 10-year plan for health reform to deliver universal access to timely, integrated care.

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1. [Anne Matthews](#) [ID](#), Dublin City University, Dublin, Ireland

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# **Foundations: co-producing a LIFE: Living Implementation Framework with Evaluation**

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**Overall aim: to co-produce learning and evidence (LIFE) from the Irish health system's COVID-19 response which informs Sláintecare's implementation**

Specifically, the LIFE scopes, documents, measures and analyses relevant COVID-19 responses that inform the delivery of Sláintecare objectives, co-producing evidence in real-time with project partners

- 1. Scope and assess Irish COVID-19 health system responses and assess if and how the responses contribute to Sláintecare's implementation**
- 2. Identify & carry out three case studies on specific COVID-19 responses which inform/accelerate/inhibit Sláintecare's implementation**
- 3. Co-produce Sláintecare 2020 (COVID-19) living implementation framework with evaluation (LIFE)**



# What made it possible to adapt the research

**PEOPLE:** Good working relationship with partners, especially lead knowledge user

The personnel were pertinent to both topics

The engagement and support of partners was key – based on good, robust, supportive working relationships with a high level of trust

**METHODS:** The research design and methods largely remained the same (ethics, contract & budget)

The nature of the research design which is iterative, co-design, co-production & largely qualitative helped

**Good will, patience & hard work**



"THE SECRET OF  
CHANGE IS TO FOCUS  
ALL OF YOUR ENERGY,  
NOT ON FIGHTING THE  
OLD, BUT ON BUILDING  
THE NEW."

— SOCRATES



# Progress to date

Completed research under way & continued work on other rapid reviews

Substantial work with partners scoping, documenting & assessing 62 COVID-19 health system responses, ongoing work on 17 clusters, collecting indicators on 10 initiatives & three in-depth cases – the focus being on sustainable and scalable elements to inform Sláintecare's implementation

Ongoing documenting of the policy process, dialogue & engagement with partners

All this is the LIFE....

Covid-19 Healthcare Initiatives & Enablers	Geographic	Sláintecare Implementation (Informs Learning)	Sláintecare Delivery (Achieves Objective)	Universal	Integrated Care	Patient is paramount	Timely care access based medical need	Free care	Prevention & public health early intervention	Shortlist	Phases
<b>Capacity &amp; Access</b>											
<b>Healthy Living</b>											
1 Influenza vaccines to be made available without charge to certain groups	National	Yes	Yes	No	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	HPSI
2 Online support for mental health and wellbeing	National	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	comm
3 Community supports to protect the elderly and vulnerable	National	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	27/02
4 Public information campaign re COVID-19 prevention and self management	National	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	comm
<b>Enhanced Community Care &amp; Capacity</b>											
1 Universal covid GP care. Agreement btw IMOs, HSE & DoH for universal GP pathway	National	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	PHS
2 Extended day consultations by GPs	Local	No	No	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	I don't
3 GP dedicated respiratory clinics in GP practices for all at risk patients	National	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Is this
4 Community Covid Hubs, 8-8, 1 day/week. HSE CHO operational governance with GPs	National	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, I
5 Community virtual wards, proof of concept 08/20 CIT referral for respiratory	National	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Dam
6 Access to methadone	National	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	HRB
7 covid-19 prison response	National	Unclear	Unclear	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	no to
8 Homeless services. Accom., additional outreach, access to healthcare	Local	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	no to
9 Intermediate Community Care/Step down facilities. Medical & 24/7 nursing care	Hospital	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	HIPE
10 Home care and supports	National	No	No	No	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	No	Yes, I
11 Establishment of 23 COVID-19 Nursing Homes Response teams across CHOs	CHOs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Probi
12 OREST, IEHG - Community Rehabilitation Enablement and Support Team (CREST)	Hospital	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	quite
13 Frailty and falls in the Community SVLH. Suite visit for patients in catchment area	Hospital	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	no to
14 NRH Occupancy decreased 85% to facilitate social distancing. Using telemedicine.	National	Unclear	Unclear	No	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	No	no to
15 Community testing services, through hospitals, NAS, GPs (initially), community test	National	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	No	Centr
16 HSE self isolation facilities also public supported at home thro meals & healthcare	National	No	No	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Yes	No	Probi
17 NAS dedicated Covid dispatch service, reinforced clinical hubs extra drs	National	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Good
18 Covid-19 contact tracing service	National	No	No	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	Yes	No	good
<b>Enhanced Acute Care &amp; Capacity</b>											
1 Additional acute public hospital beds	National	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Yes	No	Laura
2 Framework agreement with private hospitals for additional capacity in case of surge	National	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	Yes	There
3 Additional acute capacity thro private nursing home beds & leased capacity	HQ/CHOs	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	No	There
4 Delayed Transfers of Care levers	HQ/CHOs	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Yeah,
5 IEHG PPE demand modelling system and dashboard	Hospital	No	No	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	No	?
6 Procuring private ambulances to support the timely transfer of COVID-19/all patients	Hospital	No	No	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	No	?
<b>Scheduled Care</b>											
1 Elective hospitals. Cappagh providing urgent fracture and plastic surgery to hospitals	Local	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Yes	HIPE
2 Longer waiting lists - Elective day cases / inpatients / outpatient appt	National	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Unclear	No	Yes	Vatir
3 Longer community waiting list (OT's, SLT) withdrawal of services eg day care for PwD,	National	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Unclear	No	Yes	BIU
<b>Unscheduled Care</b>											
1 Reduced attendances at ED appointments	National	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	PET
<b>Eligibility &amp; Entitlement</b>											
1 Universal access to Covid-19 services - Triage, Testing, GP Consultation & care	National	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	Yes	See a
2 Universal access to remote GP Consultation for GMS & GP visit card patients	National	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	meas
<b>Enablers</b>											
<b>Governance</b>											
1 Integrated National Operations Hub winter planning, structures used for COVID-19	HQ/CHOs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	Yes	could
2 Local Authority Community Support Response to COVID-19	Local	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	?
<b>eHealth</b>											
1 Telecare & Telehealth. Attend Anywhere	National	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	Unclear	Yes	ask IC
2 eReferrals & Patient Management: Covid Trac Tracker CTT, Healthlink & SwiftHocue	National	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	

## Some \*reflections on changing research focus - Was it worth it?

\*Personal not those of the team

A privilege to be researching 'live' the most significant health policy and system change nationally and globally in my working life, perhaps in the history of modern health systems

Been credited by partners as influencing the Programme for Government, Living with COVID plan, HSE COVID Winter Plan, HSE NSP 2021 and Sláintecare implementation in 2021 & beyond....

We are in the messy bit – looking forward to 'living the LIFE' – to the gorgeousness at the end

Foundations' seeks to use health systems and policy research to inform practically and academically, the implementation of Sláintecare and health reform internationally....





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# Thank you for listening

[burkes17@tcd.ie](mailto:burkes17@tcd.ie)

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