



NEWSLETTER

Welcome

Welcome to the first issue of the SCTNI Newsletter, which you are receiving as a member of the network*. This Newsletter aims to update you on SCTNI and member activities, upcoming events, resources, and opportunities of interest.

We are especially interested in hearing information about your work, announcements, events, or anything that you think can be shared with SCTNI members. We plan to develop this newsletter and to add new sections, including a "Spotlight On..." section that profiles the activities of network members.

Please forward information to us [by email](#) and we will ensure it is included in a future issue.

Best wishes,

SCTNI Team

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SCTNI News

Ruairi's Race To Recovery

While in Budapest last year, then 19 year old student Ruairi Aspell suffered a brain haemorrhage. Thankfully due to the swift action of a friend who is a member of the Order of Malta, followed by a successful operation and top class treatment at the neurosurgical hospital, Ruairi returned home. Not only has Ruairi been making an incredible recovery, but he also took on a major challenge in February of this year: to complete the ultimate endurance swim set, 100 x 100 meters, a 10km challenge considered the marathon of swimming. As part of this challenge, Ruairi, with the support of Athlone Regional Sports Centre, set out to raise funds for the Order of Malta (Athlone), the National Institute Neurosurgery (Budapest), and the **Stroke Clinical Trials**



Network Ireland. You can learn more about the background to Ruairi's story, and why Ruairi decided to fundraise, in this [Independent Westmeath newspaper article](#), on this [Athlone Today radio show](#), or in this interview with Ruairi on [Midlands 103](#).

Ruairi recently completed this major challenge, and in the process raised an amazing €57,470, donating €28,500 to the SCTNI. Accepting this generous donation, **Prof Peter Kelly** said: "On behalf of all the team at Stroke Clinical Trials Network Ireland,

we warmly thank Ruairi, his dad Dave, and all the participants in the Race to Recovery. The funds raised will provide vital support for our research staff to run international clinical studies aimed at preventing second strokes and heart attacks in stroke survivors. Well done on your outstanding success".

CONVINCE

CONVINCE (COlchicine for preventioN of Vascular Inflammation in Non-CardioEmboic stroke) is a randomised clinical trial of low-dose colchicine for secondary prevention after stroke. This is a Phase 3 trial to compare low-dose colchicine (0.5mg/day) plus usual care, to usual care alone, to prevent recurrent ischaemic stroke and coronary events after non-cardioembolic stroke and Transient Ischemic Attack (TIA). The 500th CONVINCE patient was recruited by colleagues at Cork University Hospital, key to which was the team at the **HRB Clinical Research Facility Cork**. The CONVINCE trial has, as of May 2019, recruited 843 people, and if the current rate persists the 1000th CONVINCE patient should be reached by July this year. This is a major milestone for an Irish study. The total sample is projected to be recruited by May 2021 at the current recruitment rate.



SCTNI Clinicians Operating Group

The SCTNI Clinicians Operating Group (COG) held their first videoconference on May 1st 2019. The COG is comprised of leading stroke clinicians in the SCTNI network working together to plan and implement projects, and disseminate findings. COG members discussed potential projects, updates on current trials, including CONVINCE, as well as the process for including new trials within the SCTNI. The next COG meeting will take place at the [Irish Gerontological Society 67th Annual and Scientific Meeting](#), 26-28 Sep 2019 in Cork.



Publications & Resources

Intervention development for post-stroke cognitive rehabilitation

The StrokeCog study aims to model and modify the consequences of stroke-related cognitive impairment through intervention. Members of the StrokeCog team, which is led by **Prof Anne Hickey**, recently published an article in the journal *Disability & Rehabilitation* that examined the experiences, perspectives and preferences of stroke survivors, carers, and healthcare professionals to inform the design of a cognitive rehabilitation intervention. Issues identified by participants as being key to intervention development included: (i) implications of post-stroke cognitive impairment survivors' confidence; (ii) their individual capacity in terms of fatigue and metacognition; and (iii) practical issues such as intervention location. The inclusion of psychoeducation regarding consequences of stroke was recommended. The article can be [accessed here](#).

Effectiveness and safety of dual agent antiplatelet therapy with clopidogrel and aspirin

A recently published paper in the *BMJ*, which **Prof Martin O'Donnell** was involved in, details an updated systematic review and meta-analysis of randomised, placebo controlled trials that enrolled patients with non-cardioembolic minor ischaemic stroke or high risk TIA within three days of presentation and addressed the effectiveness and safety of dual antiplatelet therapy with clopidogrel and aspirin versus either agent alone. The study found that dual antiplatelet therapy with clopidogrel and aspirin given within 24 hours after high risk TIA or minor ischaemic stroke reduces the risk of subsequent stroke by about 2%, with few serious adverse consequences. The findings also raise questions about how the dual antiplatelet therapy should be used in clinical practice. The article can be [accessed here](#). This systematic review informs a parallel clinical practice guideline to be published in a multilayered electronic format in The BMJ and MAGICapp.

Women in the European Stroke Organisation

An increasing proportion of physicians are women, yet they still face challenges with career advancement. In 2014, the European Stroke Organisation established the goal of increasing the number and participation of women within the society. Drawing on organisational records, a study recently published in the *European Stroke Journal* by the Women's Initiative for Stroke in Europe (WISE) found that the proportion of women holding positions of seniority and leadership in 2017 is still significantly lower to the proportion of women attending educational activities. Structured leadership training for women represents the next step to promote continuing inclusion of women in ESO. The article can be [accessed here](#).

RAMI Research Awards

The Royal Academy of Medicine in Ireland, in association with the *Irish Journal of Medical Science*, invites submissions of your published paper to the RAMI Research Awards. The awards are open to all those involved in Irish medical research who have had a clinical research paper

published in an indexed journal between June 1 2017 to June 30 2019. Submissions for the RAMI Research Awards are being accepted up to 3 October 2019. More information [available here](#).



Upcoming Events & Training

Events and Training on the SCTNI website

The SCTNI website now includes a [calendar of upcoming events](#) that will be updated regularly. Please [forward by email](#) details of any events you wish to include on the website or in this newsletter. The SCTNI website now also includes a searchable database of existing and new training and education opportunities of relevance to SCTNI members and colleagues working in clinical trials. Listed training and education opportunities include certified and uncertified courses, as well as online or face-to-face delivery and research supports. Details of training opportunities can be [accessed here](#).

ESOC 2019 and related events

The European Stroke Organisation Conference (ESOC) is the premier European forum for stroke research and rapidly becoming the world's foremost platform for the release of major trial data. ESOC will take place in Milan later this month, 22-24 May 2019, and many SCTNI members will be in attendance. The ESO Trials Alliance will host a half-day pre-conference symposium on 21 May in Milan to discuss ongoing trials work and related projects in the **ESO Trials Alliance** stroke trials networks. More than ten people from Ireland will attend the symposium, with **Prof Peter Kelly** and **Prof Anne Hickey** updating on the stroke trials network activities in Ireland. Later that evening **ESO WISE** will host a Stroke Leadership workshop, which follows on from the Women in the ESO article detailed above and promotes gender equity in academic stroke research and clinical trial leadership ([programme available here](#)).

Working Qualitatively in Trial and Healthcare Methodology Research Workshop

QUESTS and the HRB-TMRN, in partnership with the International Institute for Qualitative Methodology (IIQM), will host a two-day workshop on "Working Qualitatively in Trial and Healthcare Methodology Research" in NUI Galway, 30-31 May 2019. Workshops will be facilitated by local and internationally-known experts, and will focus on: i) Rigour in qualitative research in trials; ii) Qualitative data analysis; iii) Mixed methods research; iv) Grant writing and publishing for impact; v) How to be more effective, successful, and happy as a student, academic, or researcher. [Click here](#) for more details on the workshop and to register.

IPPOSI Patient Education Programme in Health Innovation

As SCTNI members will be aware, public and patient involvement in health research is about creating an active partnership between the public/patients and researchers/clinicians to allow the voice and view of the patient to influence how research is conducted. IPPOSI aims to equip patient members and their communities with the tools and knowledge to empower

patients' and lay people, and to promote their meaningful involvement in health innovation. In support of this, IPPOSI will run their Patient Education Programme in Health Innovation later in 2019, and application are being accepted until 18 November 2019. More details, including eligibility criteria, are [available here](#).

Save the Date: ESO-WSO Conference 2020

The European Stroke Organisation (ESO) is a pan-European society of stroke researchers and physicians, national and regional stroke societies and lay organisations that was founded in December 2007. The World Stroke Organization (WSO) has a mission to reduce the global burden of stroke through prevention, treatment and long term care. WSO is approved by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a non-governmental organisation for official relations. Join the ESO and the WSO for their jointly organised stroke conference in Vienna, 12-15 May 2020. This is your opportunity to be part of a new level of collaboration across Europe and the World. [More detail here](#).

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