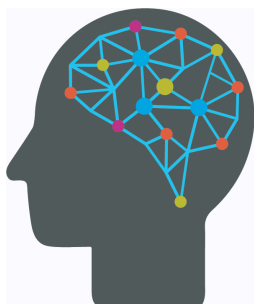


DRNI CONNECT
Issue No. 25 - February 2025



DEMENTIA RESEARCH NETWORK IRELAND

Prevention, Cure & Care for
Neurodegenerative Diseases

Welcome to the 25th issue of

DRNI CONNECT!

In this edition of DRNI CONNECT, we highlight our upcoming **webinar on the neuropharmacology of dementia** and other brain diseases, and the **DRNI Early Career Researcher Day 2025**, a fantastic platform for emerging researchers in dementia on the island of Ireland. We spotlight the **PERI-MIND study**, which investigates the experiences of those navigating menopause with high risk of dementia, as well as the **TeamUp for Dementia Research evaluation**.

Our research updates include the **REVEAL study**, which explores the eye as a window to Alzheimer's in Down syndrome, and the **HRB-EU Joint Programme on Neurodegenerative Disease Research 2025**, a key funding opportunity. We also feature the **AIHPC Specialist Palliative Care Communities of Practice (CoP)** and the **Engaging Dementia 17th Annual Conference**, and highlight **Dementia: Understand Together**, a campaign driving awareness and support for those affected by dementia.

As always, if you have any news, projects or events that you would like to see featured in DRNI CONNECT, or if you want to get involved with DRNI in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me. Happy reading!

Vanessa Moore PhD
Scientific Project Manager
Dementia Research Network Ireland
mooreva@tcd.ie

CONTENTS:

- 1) Webinar - Neuropharmacology of dementia and other brain diseases
- 2) DRNI Early Career Researcher Day 2025
- 3) PERI-MIND
- 4) TeamUp for Dementia Research evaluation
- 5) REVEAL study - Eye in Down syndrome as a window to Alzheimer's Disease
- 6) AIHPC Specialist Palliative Care Communities of Practice (CoP)
- 7) Engaging Dementia 17th Annual Conference
- 8) HRB - EU Joint Programme Neurodegenerative Disease Research 2025
- 9) Dementia: Understand Together
- 10) Bluesky thinking

**1) Webinar: Neuropharmacology of dementia and other brain diseases**

How can neuropharmacology help to maintain and restore cognition and memory function?

What drug and non-drug approaches are there to stimulate the brain?

These are just some of the questions that Dr. Andrea Kwakowsky, University of Galway and Professor Keith Murphy, UCD will seek to answer in our upcoming webinar, [Neuropharmacology of dementia and other brain diseases](#) on **Thursday, 13 March at 11.00 am.**

evidence of the remodelling of excitatory and inhibitory neuronal networks in the Alzheimer's disease brain and other neurological conditions. Some of the promising therapeutic approaches that are currently under investigation in her lab will be discussed .

Professor Keith Murphy will focus on **Investigating how memory works: In search of better cognition enhancing drugs**. This talk will introduce what we know and what we are finding out about how our brain's store memories. The talk will explore how we might be able to use that knowledge to develop new drugs that can enhance and protect our memory function against dementia and other brain diseases.

Meet our speakers:

Dr Andrea Kwakowsky is a lecturer in pharmacology at the School of Medicine, University of Galway. Her primary research interest is in the molecular and cellular basis of brain function in Alzheimer's disease (AD), Huntington's disease (HD) and Multiple sclerosis (MS). Dr Kwakowsky's lab conducts multi-disciplinary research that aims to transform the understanding of the pathological mechanisms of neurodegenerative diseases and find novel drug targets and therapeutic strategies, and to understand the underlying pathology of disorders such as AD, and to determine whether manipulation of specific neuronal pathways could be part of an effective treatment.

Keith Murphy is Professor of Neuropharmacology at the School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Science, University College Dublin, where he runs the Neurotherapeutics Research Group. This group is dedicated to understanding brain function and dysfunction, and the identification of novel drug targets for the treatment of neurological and neurodegenerative diseases such as drug addiction, depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, cognitive decline and multiple sclerosis. Professor Murphy's research uses several different approaches including animal models of behaviour, in vivo site-directed interruption of function, in vitro cell and organoid culture techniques, transcriptomics and proteomics, and computational neuroscience, to develop these much-needed new neurotherapeutics.

To register for the webinar, please click [HERE](#).



2) DRNI Early Career Researcher Day 2025

DRNI are in full preparation for our **Early Career Research Day**, taking place Tuesday, 04 March in the Centre for Public Health, Royal Victoria Hospital, Queen's University Belfast. We are especially thrilled to be able to host the event in Belfast for the first time!

DRNI Early Career Research Day brings together early career professionals working in the area of dementia research from across the island of Ireland. The objective of the day is to allow early career professionals from all disciplines to meet with their peers and share their research, to promote increased collaboration, and career opportunities. This year again sees PPI representatives taking part in the judging panel to evaluate presentations from a PPI perspective.

This year, [The Alzheimer Society of Ireland](#), [Dementia Trials Ireland](#), and [Neuroscience Ireland](#) each provided a number of travel bursaries for Early Career Researchers to enable them to travel. DRNI are very thankful to all three organisations for their generosity and support!

While all in-person places are booked out, the DRNI ECR Day is being livestreamed - to register to attend virtually, please click [HERE](#).

3) PERI-MIND

The *Perimenopausal and menopausal individuals dementia risk intervention* (PERI-MIND) project aims to learn more about the experiences of people going through menopause who are at higher risk of dementia.

The study is being carried out by a team at the School of Medicine at the University of Chicago, and they are currently seeking participants. The study is open to all nationalities and the researchers are keen to have participants from many backgrounds.

Participants needed for research evaluating dementia risk and menopause:

- PERI-MIND is a groundbreaking research study investigating the experiences of those navigating menopause with high risk of dementia. Your participation will help in the development of a personalised support to reduce dementia risk.
- [Click here](#) to find out more about this paid study and how you can be a part of advancing menopause research, or email the team at: griffithlab@bsd.uchicago.edu.



UCC
University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

What is your experience of

TeamUp for Dementia Research

We are conducting an evaluation of The Alzheimer Society of Ireland's 'TeamUp for Dementia Research' service. We want to know about what works well, and any ideas for improvement.

If you are a healthcare professional, researcher, policy maker, member of an advocacy organisation, with close links to dementia research and/or TeamUp for Dementia Research, please get in touch to **participate in a short interview!**

Email laurenmahony@ucc.ie
Call 0857889499

THE Alzheimer SOCIETY OF IRELAND

Researchers at the [Centre for Gerontology and Rehabilitation, University College Cork](#) are conducting an evaluation of The Alzheimer Society of Ireland's [TeamUp for Dementia Research](#) service. This service connects people living with dementia and family carers with opportunities to take part in dementia research in a safe and supported way, and currently has over 350 members.

The team at UCC are conducting interviews with key stakeholders including researchers, academics, clinicians, and policy makers with close links to dementia research to learn what is working well and if there are any ideas for improvement so the service can continue to grow.

As a stakeholder in dementia research, advocacy, or policy in Ireland, the evaluators are interested to hear your perspective of using TeamUp for Dementia Research, or how the service has impacted or could impact your role. Interviews will take place online or by telephone and require no longer than 30 minutes of your time.

If you are interested in participating or learning more, click [HERE](#) for more details or contact the PI for the project Dr. Emma O'Shea (emma.oshea@ucc.ie / 0857889499) or RA Lauren O'Mahony (laurenmahony@ucc.ie).

Have you been diagnosed with Mild Cognitive Impairment or early Alzheimer's?

People diagnosed with **Mild Cognitive Impairment or early Alzheimer's Disease** aged **50-80** years from a memory clinic are being invited to take part in an eye imaging research study. This is called the **REVEAL** Study. We are investigating how the structures of the eye could indicate early changes of Alzheimer's disease.

Individuals are invited to come to the **Northern Ireland Clinical Research Facility (Belfast City Hospital)** for some vision tests and photographs of the inside of the eyes. We would also like to take tear, spit (saliva) and blood samples, along with completing some straightforward memory and behavioural tests.

We can organize the visit at a time that suits you in 2025.

If you, family or friends would like to take part or hear more about the research, please get in contact with Dr Aoife Hunter by email at a.hunter@ulster.ac.uk or text/call **+44 7856 928465**.

Queen's University Belfast **Alzheimer's Society** **Ulster University**

For further information: Email: a.hunter@ulster.ac.uk Telephone: +44 28 7012 3416

5) REVEAL study - Eye in Down syndrome as a window to Alzheimer's Disease

A research team in Ulster University and Queen's University Belfast investigating how the structures of the eye could indicate early changes of Alzheimer's disease are looking for participants. The School of Biomedical Sciences, Ulster University is working on an Alzheimer's Society UK-funded project, the REVEAL study, investigating eye structure and function in people with and without Down syndrome who have mild age-related changes in cognition.

They are currently recruiting participants with early cognitive decline/Alzheimer's disease aged 50-80 years. The participation would entail visiting Belfast City Hospital on one occasion for some vision tests and photographs of the inside of the eyes. To find out more about the research, please contact Dr. Aoife Hunter by email at

6) AIIHPC Specialist Palliative Care Communities of Practice

The All Ireland Institute of Hospice and Palliative Care ([AIIHPC](#)) Specialist Palliative Care Communities of Practice (CoP) are dynamic and dedicated platforms for a number of specialist disciplines working within the realm of palliative care across the island of Ireland. The CoPs provide a shared context for health and social care professionals to communicate and circulate information, enables dialogue between people who come together to learn, improve practice, build new knowledge, foster professional growth and networking and advancing the standards of palliative care across all relevant settings.

The AIIHPC facilitates the development of Communities of Practice for relevant Specialist Palliative Care practitioner, and these communities regularly come together on an all-Island basis to present and discuss good practice and challenges their disciplines face. The Community of Practice model provides an interactive opportunity for Specialist Palliative Care practitioners in 8 areas and there are currently 396 practitioners across these communities:

- [Physiotherapy](#)
- [Nursing \(Northern Ireland only\)](#)
- [Pastoral Care & Chaplaincy](#)
- [Infection Control Managers](#)
- [Dieticians](#)
- [Speech & Language Therapy](#)
- [Social Work](#)
- [Occupational Therapy](#)

Clicking on the links will allow you to join one of the CoPs. If you have any queries on the Communities of Practice, please contact Mel Nugent, Programme Manager – Education and Practice via email: mnugent@aiahpc.org.

**'BRIDGING WORLDS IN DEMENTIA CARE:
CONNECTING GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND LOCAL SOLUTIONS'**

			
IRACEMA LEROI Global Brain Health Institute	SHEENA CADOO & CHARLIE DRAKE North Cork Dementia Alliance	SEAN O'DOWD Updates on Medical Research	MICHELLE KELLY Cognitive Stimulation Therapy
			
MIKE HANRAHAN Music Therapy & Dementia	PAUL MALONEY Update on the National Dementia Office and Cognitive Stimulation Therapy Working Group	CARU End of Life Programmes	PANEL DISCUSSION ON CARING
			
DEMENTIA CAFE PANEL	PANEL DISCUSSION ON THE SENSES	IRMA EVERINK & SIL AARTS Collaboration between Maastricht University and Nursing	FRANK GOLDEN Sharing about writing a book about Irish History
			
IRENE HARTIGAN InTouch Research	FIONA FOLEY Brain Health	EDEL CAREY Feileacan Ban (White Butterfly) Supports	IRISH RAIL Dementia Inclusive Travel
			
XIAOXIAO HOU Chinese Cultural supports in Liverpool and role of music	SUZANNE DOOLEY Dementia and Communication	IRISH DEMENTIA WORKING GROUP	Engaging Dementia WWW.ENGAGINGDEMENTIA.IE

7) Engaging Dementia 17th Annual Conference

Engaging Dementia are hosting their 17th International Dementia Conference in Athlone, Co. Roscommon, on the 7th and 8th of May. The theme of the conference is "Bridging Worlds in Dementia Care: Connecting Global Perspectives and Local Solutions".

Speakers will cover a wide variety of topics such as Person-Centred Training and Therapeutic Interventions, Young Onset Dementia, Dementia Inclusion in the Community, Late-Stage Dementia and End of Life, People with Intellectual Disability and Dementia, to name a few.

To book your ticket for the conference please go to: [17th International Dementia Conference 2025 - Engaging Dementia](https://www.engagingdementia.ie). There is a special rate for students wishing to attend the conference - €110 for a 2 day ticket and €75 for a 1 day ticket.

For further details and updates on the conference programme, keep on eye on www.engagingdementia.ie.

8) HRB - EU Joint Programme Neurodegenerative Disease Research 2025

The Health Research Board is participating in the EU Joint Programme – Neurodegenerative Disease Research (JPND) Joint Transnational Call 2025 entitled “*Health and social care research with a focus on the moderate and late stages of neurodegenerative diseases*”.

The aim of the call is to improve the well-being of people with neurodegenerative diseases through social sciences and humanities research. More specifically, proposals will aim to increase understanding of the factors that hamper social inclusion, civic participation, dignity and quality of life of patients and their families and to develop more adequate concepts of easily accessible support for people with neurodegenerative diseases at moderate, advanced and end of life stages.

Closing date for application is Tuesday, 04 March - more information can be found [HERE](#).



9) Dementia: Understand Together

Dementia: Understand Together aims to create an Ireland that embraces and includes people living with dementia, and displays solidarity with them and their loved ones. The campaign is one of the 6 priority actions of the [National Dementia Strategy](#), which identifies key principles to underpin and inform the full range of services provided to people with dementia, their families and carers. It is also an integral part of the [Model of Care](#) with focus on continuing to increase awareness and understanding of dementia as well as post diagnostic supports for people with dementia, families, carers and supporters.

Dementia: Understand Together is led by the HSE working in partnership with members of the Irish Dementia Working Group, the Dementia Carers Campaign Network, the Alzheimer Society of Ireland, Age Friendly Ireland, Healthy Ireland, Age & Opportunity and the Dementia Services Information and Development Centre at St James' Hospital.

and more than 1200 community champions who are working together to create dementia inclusive communities in which people with dementia are respected and supported.

If you would like to get involved, click [HERE](#).

10) Bluesky thinking

Finally, a brief note to let our readers know that DRNI now has a Bluesky account. To join us there, please click [HERE](#) or find us using the handle **@drni.bsky.social**.



[linkedin.com/company/drni](https://www.linkedin.com/company/drni)



[@drni.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/drni.bsky.social)



[dementianetwork.ie](https://www.dementianetwork.ie)



[@drnire](https://twitter.com/drnire)

This email was sent to <<Email Address>>

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

Dementia Research Network Ireland · Mira Office No. 4, Mercer's Institute for Successful Ageing (MISA), · MISA Building, St. James's Hospital · Dublin, D8 0000 · Ireland

