



**St Patrick's**  
Mental Health Services



**Annual Report and  
Financial Statements**  
**2024**

St Patrick's Mental Health Services strives to fulfil our founder Jonathan Swift's vision of a society where everyone is given the opportunity to live mentally healthy lives.



*Walk in My Shoes' annual Frame of Mind short-film competition awards ceremony in the Irish Film Institute in April 2024*



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# Report of the Chairman of the Board of Governors

Since 1746, St Patrick's Mental Health Services (SPMHS) has been at the forefront of providing care and treatment to those experiencing mental health difficulties in Ireland. We remain steadfast in our commitment to providing the highest quality care and to educating and empowering people to live mentally healthy lives. This includes planning ahead for the future mental health needs of society and visualising the role that SPMHS will play in that.



During 2024, significant progress was made on the strategic objectives outlined within our 2023 to 2027 organisational strategy, *The Future in Mind*. The advancement of these objectives will see SPMHS evolve and transform, all the while maintaining our focus on the provision of mental healthcare of the highest standards. It is through our energetic and committed staff that we are well positioned to plan for the future, while continuing to deliver the highest quality care.

Our ever-evolving model of care continues to receive excellent feedback from service users and their families and supporters, and we are proud to support thousands of people every year in their mental health recovery journeys and in empowering them to live mentally healthy lives.

## Building for the future

The unique governance structure of SPMHS offers us complete autonomy when it comes to shaping and delivering our services. We are governed by a charitable trust set out by the Charter established in 1746; an historical construct which works well to the present day and ensures full transparency. SPMHS receives no Government funding, instead operating as an independent, not-for-profit entity. Our financial resources continue to be wholly reinvested in to improving and strengthening the organisation and its service offering. The return on this investment is clearly reflected in our day-to-day operations – evident in our increasing range of services and the outstanding reports we receive from Mental Health Commission inspections annually.

## Achieving high standards of governance

SPMHS is independently governed by a voluntary Board of Governors, comprised of 12 non-executive voluntary members who receive no remuneration for their services.





The Board, including its five sub-committees and management, assumes the responsibility of administering our charitable trust on a not-for-profit basis. Our high standards of corporate governance are capably upheld by the Board via its regular meetings.

In accordance with the Charter, the Board met 10 times in 2024, with alternate meetings taking place in person and virtually. The day-to-day management of the organisation is delegated to our outstanding executive management team, led by the Chief Executive; although the Board has the final decision on strategy matters.

Each month, the Board appoints one of its members as “visiting governor”. This appointee visits a specific area or service and reports to the Board at the next meeting. Members of the Board attend a Service User Consultative Forum every quarter and report back to the Board on the issues discussed.

## **The people who shape our organisation**

We are honoured to have such a dedicated Board of Governors at SPMHS who give generously of their time, knowledge and expertise.

Their contributions are invaluable, and I want to take the opportunity to thank them for the ongoing commitment they have shown year-on-year. The Board includes the Most Reverend Doctor Michael Jackson, the Very Reverend Doctor William Wright Morton, the Very Reverend Dermot Dunne, Prof Joyce O'Connor, Mrs Bernadette Godley, Ms Caroline Gill, Prof Damian Mohan, Mr Michael Moriarty, Mr Tom Godfrey and Mr Kevin Nowlan.

SPMHS continues to hold a unique and vital place in Ireland's mental healthcare landscape. Our mission remains steadfast. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my sincere thanks to our dedicated staff, volunteers and supporters. Their commitment is the foundation of our continued success. Personally, I look forward to the years ahead as we watch SPMHS grow and evolve into an even stronger and more innovative service for those who need us.

### **Danny Kitchen**

*Chairman, Board of Governors,  
St Patrick's Mental Health Services*

# Chief Executive Foreword

**With increasing economic, social and environmental pressures affecting each of our everyday lives, the role of effective and responsive mental health services has never been more important. At St Patrick's Mental Health Services (SPMHS), we believe it is our duty to ensure that we are doing all we possibly can to improve the mental health of every person we encounter, and we remain committed to ensuring we play an active role in changing the outlook of our nation's mental health landscape for the better.**



The improvements and developments we endeavour to make are done with the sole focus of ensuring those experiencing mental health difficulties are given the best opportunity to live fulfilling lives.

During 2024, our services continued to evolve in line with the changing demands of society but without ever straying from our core mission. Our current strategy, *The Future in Mind*, succinctly outlines our five-year priorities from 2023 to 2027, and 2024 saw significant progress made on many of those commitments.

The strategy is ambitious and admittedly presents its own challenges, such as modernising our facilities while staying true to our unique heritage; achieving meaningful partnership with our service users; and continually aiming for, and attaining, operational excellence. This all must be achieved while further enhancing our services, extending our reach, and continuing to embrace the possibilities of technology.

Transforming the historic St Patrick's University Hospital building on our Dublin 8 campus into a national centre for mentally healthy living is a key priority outlined in our strategy. A crucial milestone in this project was reached in early 2024, with the first phase of the national centre programme building transformation works approved by the Board of Governors. The first phase of this project, which includes essential repair and maintenance works to conserve and protect the Historic Building fabric, commenced in late 2024 and will be progressed throughout 2025. The second phase to establish an interactive education centre on the ground floor of the Historic Building will follow.

In late 2024, confirmation was received that the planned development of a new hospital campus on our existing St Patrick's Hospital, Lucan (St Edmundsbury) site in Dublin now has the full support of South Dublin County Council (SDCC) and we welcome this decision. During 2025, we will commence consultations with local and key stakeholders as we seek to progress this proposed development.



*Tom Maher, Director of Services; Dr Gráinne Donohue, Programme Manager, Academic Institute; Prof Paul Fearon, Medical Director; and Sherrie Buckley, Occupational Therapy Manager*

SPMHS has always been so much more than its bricks and mortar, and this has been exemplified by the ongoing success and continued integration and consolidation of our Homecare service, which now accounts for 20% of our inpatient service activity. The Homecare Service continues to be incorporated into the contracts with all the health insurers and the nursing Homecare Hub is now fully operational.

As part of our ongoing strategic developments, the 33-bed Grattan ward at St Patrick's University Hospital was closed in 2024, while St Patrick's Hospital, Lucan successfully reverted to its full inpatient capacity following changes in 2020 necessitated by the pandemic. Technology-enabled services were also further consolidated in the Dean Clinics during 2024 and now approximately 60% of these services are delivered remotely. Homecare represented 57% of Willow Grove activity in 2024.



The Homecare service is just one element of our service, however, and new pathways and treatment interventions have been developed in response to clinical needs analysis throughout the organisation.

These pathways and interventions are provided across all facets of the service including inpatient services, Homecare services, outpatient services, day services and hybrids of these services.

SPMHS continues to lead by example in its digital transformation, and in 2024 we continued to consolidate our digital health technologies across the organisation, as well as investing in technology-enabled care to support the delivery of remote services. The use of our innovative service user portal, Your Portal, was further embedded, empowering even more service users with access to their online personal health records. We also continue to leverage eMental health technologies to develop innovative mental health interventions and supports.

SPMHS also operates under several agreements with the HSE that work extremely well and provide valuable access via the public health system. Service agreements signed or renewed between the HSE and SPMHS in 2024 included HSE CHO5 (counties Wexford, Waterford, Laois, Kilkenny and Tipperary) and CHO7 (Dublin Southwest and Kildare).



I am pleased to say that the Mental Health Commission found extremely high levels of compliance in its inspection of all our sites in 2024, with Willow Grove Adolescent Unit receiving 100% compliance with the rules, regulations and codes of practice (for the fifth year running); St Patrick's University Hospital receiving 97% compliance; and St Patrick's Hospital, Lucan, receiving 97% compliance.

Research is a key activity area of SPMHS, and our Academic Institute's *Research Strategy*, developed in collaboration with the service user and carer-led steering group and approved by the clinical advisory group, was further embedded within the organisation throughout 2024. A specific research communications strategy commenced in 2024 with the aim of proactively promoting research and demonstrating its vital role in improving population health; increasing understanding and awareness of mental health; and contributing to high-quality evidence-informed services.



A rich new research repository, St Patrick's Institutional Research Repository (SPIRE), launched among SPMHS staff in late 2024, with a public launch following in 2025. SPIRE is the first online repository in Ireland to bring together an exclusive collection of mental health-specific research from Irish researchers at St Patrick's Mental Health Services, Trinity College Dublin and more, with a current collection of over 500+ research items.

One source of immense pride for SPMHS is our strong partnership with our service users, both past and present. In 2024, our Service Users and Supporters Council (SUAS) continued to champion improved communication, accessibility and awareness of engagement opportunities, and offered valuable insights and feedback on many of our key developments. They are experts by experience and their insights and input will be crucial as we continue our evolution.

Complementing the clinical work that we do is our advocacy efforts and critical awareness-raising endeavours. This has been clearly articulated in our *Advocacy Strategy*, which further defines this crucial element of our work.

Our awareness-raising campaigns such as Walk in My Shoes always see significant traction among the public, and in 2024, SPMHS held a number of successful events, opening up our campus to a broader audience and contributing to the destigmatisation of mental health difficulties.

Supporting other relevant voluntary organisation's work will always remain a core priority for SPMHS; indeed, we view it as an essential activity. In 2024, we continued to contribute funding for the National Parents Council's (NPC) 'Supporting Parents to Support their Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing' Primary School Programme, as well as the Irish Society of Prevention of Cruelty to Children's Digital Mental Health and Wellbeing Programmes for children and their carers.

Amid a global shortage of healthcare staff, SPMHS has continued to recruit and retain the very best. Each one of our people plays a pivotal role in allowing our organisation to carry out the vital work that we do every day of every year, allowing us to meet challenges head on and maintain the very highest standards of care.

Our *Annual Report* always offers a valuable opportunity to reflect on the progress and achievements of the past year - celebrating our strengths while also identifying areas for growth. As we continue to honour our mission and vision, we remain focused on delivering a mental health service that harnesses the power of technology and responds to the evolving challenges of our time.

In 2025, SPMHS is strongly positioned to further implement our strategic plan, *The Future in Mind*. This strategy enables us to advance our core goals: delivering the highest quality human rights-based care; partnering with service users; advancing research; raising awareness of mental health; advocating for the rights of those experiencing mental health difficulties; and supporting staff and organisations working in mental health through training.

**Paul Gilligan**

*Chief Executive Officer*

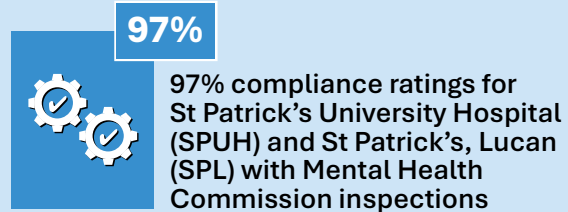
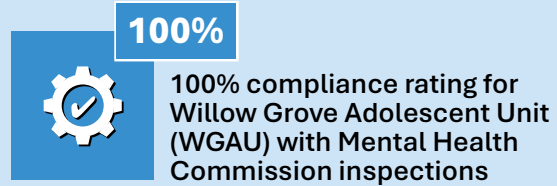
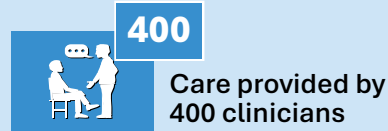
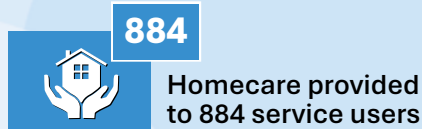
*St Patrick's Mental Health Services*



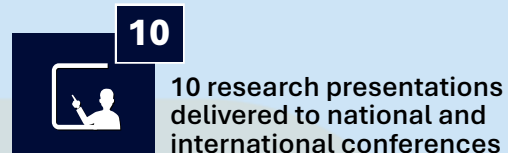
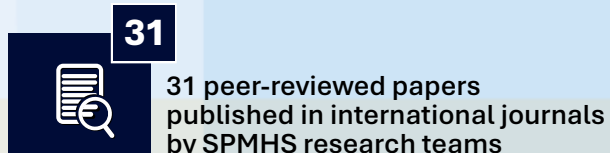


# SPMHS in numbers 2024

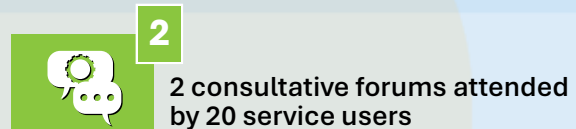
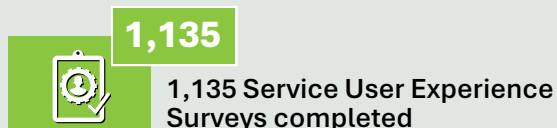
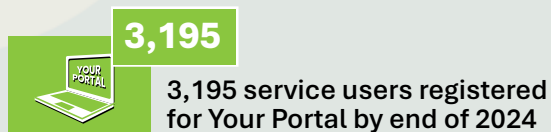
## Service delivery



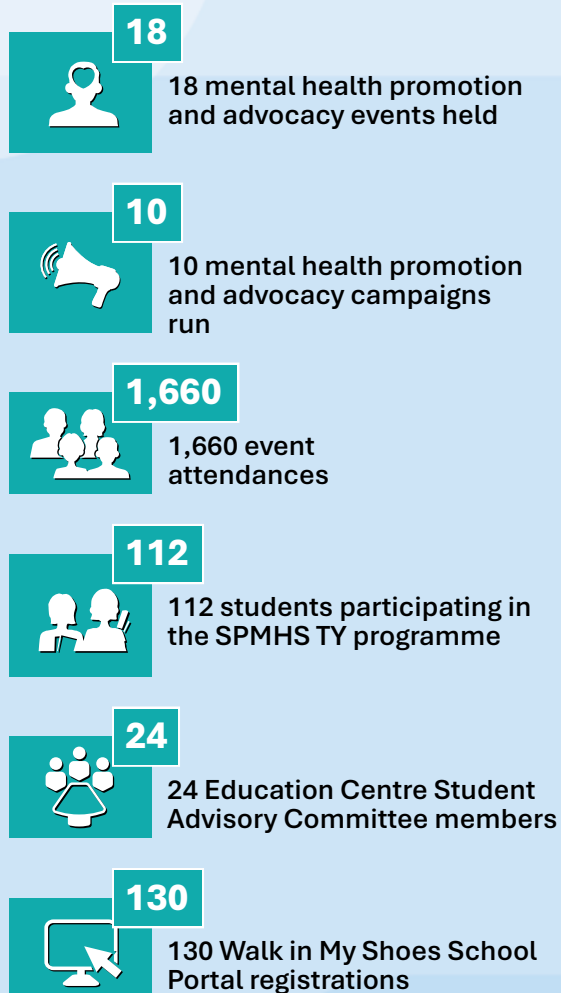
## Research and training



## Service user engagement



## Advocacy and education





# Service Delivery

**An independently governed, not-for-profit mental health service, St Patrick's Mental Health Services (SPMHS) offers care and treatment for service users from all over Ireland via a specialised range of integrated services.**

SPMHS encompasses three Mental Health Commission-approved centres, including our two adult inpatient centres at St Patrick's University Hospital (SPUH) and St Patrick's Hospital, Lucan (formerly St Edmundsbury Hospital), and Willow Grove Adolescent Unit (WGAU). The full continuum of care is provided for all of our service users on their journey to recovery, with our expansive array of inpatient, outpatient and day services, as well as our Homecare service. In recent years, our model of care has been adapted to align with the evolving landscape of healthcare, integrating digital technologies to enhance access and outcomes. Technology-enabled care is now the basis for many of our services, and their integration and consolidation continued apace in 2024.



SPMHS is a pioneer in digital health, offering remote care, virtual therapy programmes and digital assessments that allow individuals to access support wherever they are, without compromising quality or confidentiality.

This fundamental shift in our model of care has required a significant and ongoing investment in advanced technology, but this has enabled us to provide high-quality remote care without any dilution of the quality, privacy or security required. Our ambitious *Digital Transformation Strategy 2023-2027* was published in May 2024 and a number of digital-enabling projects were commenced and delivered throughout the year as we begin this body of work.

The Homecare service was further consolidated within SPMHS in 2024 and accounted for over 20% of all our inpatient admissions, compared with 17.5% for 2023. During 2024, the 33-bed Grattan Ward at SPUH was closed and these 33 "beds" were transferred to the Homecare service. We continue to develop and refine the Homecare service to ensure it continues to meet the needs of our service users. In 2024, the nursing Homecare Hub became fully operational, and the Homecare service continues to be incorporated into the contracts with all the health insurers.



As part of our commitment to rights-based care and treatment, we have continually invested in improving our service user portal, Your Portal, which allows our service users to readily access their online personal health records. The integration and adoption of Your Portal across SPMHS' inpatient, day care and outpatient care pathways continued in 2024.



Our eSwift electronic health record allows the seamless flow of information across the entire organisation, and in 2024 many more eSwift digital enablers continued to be developed. For example, in 2024 the ability to send and receive information using Your Portal questionnaires and eSwift was further enabled for a range of clinical pathways:

- Adult ADHD Self-Report Scale
- Ritvo Autism Asperger Diagnostic Scale
- PCL – 5
- CBT Scales (PHQ-9 & GAD-7)
- Autism Spectrum Quotient.

Of note, these digitally enabled assessment tools can be used by any SPMHS service area, including for in-person admissions, Homecare services, Dean Clinic outpatients and day services.

Clinical activity

SPMHS comprises three approved centres including St Patrick’s University Hospital (SPUH) with 208 inpatient beds; St Patrick’s Hospital, Lucan (SPL - formerly St Edmundsbury Hospital) with 52 inpatient beds and Willow Grove Adolescent Unit (WGAU) with 14 inpatient beds. SPMHS continues to experience a year-on-year increase in demand for our services. While technology-enabled care once again increased during 2024, in-person mental healthcare and treatment remains the cornerstone of clinical activities within SPMHS.

The table below shows the numbers and percentages of admission care/treatment days delivered in 2024, providing a breakdown of the in-person inpatient care days versus Homecare service days.

No. (%) of Inpatient admission days and Homecare admission days 2024

	Total adult (SPUH and SPL)	Total adolescent (WGAU)	Total
Homecare service admission days	18,748 (18.1%)	3,139 (56.7%)	21,887 (20.0%)
Inpatient admission days	84,945 (81.9%)	2,401 (43.3%)	87,346 (80.0%)
Total admission days	103,693	5,540	109,233

These activity figures incorporate the inpatient services funded by health insurance companies including VHI, Laya and Irish Life.

The figures also relate to care and treatment that we provide to a small number of individuals via several long-standing agreements with the HSE. Service agreements signed or renewed between the HSE and SPMHS in 2024 included HSE CHO5 (counties Wexford, Waterford, Laois, Kilkenny and Tipperary) and CHO7 (Dublin Southwest and Kildare). These partnerships involve delivering services such as mental health assessment, outpatient treatment of children and adolescents, and provision of inpatient care to adults. Through these agreements, we provide inpatient care for service users in these geographic areas upon request.

Dean Clinics

The Dean Clinics play a pivotal role in the overall care delivery framework within SPMHS, underpinning our commitment to accessible, community-based mental healthcare. In line with international best practices and national legislative requirements, these clinics offer initial mental health assessments; ensure the continuity of care following inpatient treatment; and promote early intervention, accessibility and ongoing support for individuals experiencing mental health difficulties.





In 2024, the Dean Clinics - operating in Dublin, Cork, and Galway - provided a total of 16,572 appointments, reflecting a 1.9% increase from the previous year. This growth, although modest, signals the sustained demand for high-quality community-based mental health services. These appointments catered to a wide range of mental health concerns, including but not limited to anxiety, depression, trauma-related disorders, eating disorders, substance misuse, dementia and other psychological presentations. The range and complexity of these cases underscore the clinics' role in delivering multidisciplinary, specialised mental health support.

The continued integration of technology-enabled care into routine clinical practice has meant that digital service delivery has become an important element of the Dean Clinics' approach, improving flexibility and enhancing accessibility for service users across geographical and mobility constraints. In 2024, 63.4% of all Dean Clinic appointments were delivered through audio/visual communication platforms, marking a 12.4% increase from 2023. This expansion reflects our responsiveness to service user preferences and evolving models of mental healthcare.





## Day services

The Wellness and Recovery Centre (WRC) plays a pivotal role within the continuum of care at SPMHS, offering a diverse range of recovery-oriented and specialist clinical programmes designed to support individuals at various stages of their mental health journey. The WRC functions both as a step-down service - providing structured support following inpatient admission or Homecare treatment - and as a step-up intervention for service users accessing care through the Dean Clinics who may require more intensive therapeutic input.

Throughout 2024, the WRC maintained its commitment to accessible and flexible care by continuing to deliver many of its day programmes entirely or partially through technology-enabled platforms. Some individuals reported a strong preference for online formats, citing reasons such as greater flexibility around work commitments, reduced travel time and costs and enhanced convenience, which enabled better integration of mental health support into their daily lives. Day care activity increased by 0.6% compared with 2023, but day care activity has grown overall by 20% in the past seven years.

Programmes at the WRC are facilitated by highly trained multidisciplinary teams who bring specialist expertise to the design and delivery of care. These teams include clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, occupational therapists, social workers, pharmacists and mental health nurses, all working collaboratively to deliver evidence-based, person-centred interventions. The clinical programmes focus primarily on specific mental health difficulties, psychoeducational content and supportive therapeutic interventions, and are designed to empower service users with skills for symptom management, emotional regulation and long-term recovery.

The integration of specialist clinical programmes within a recovery-oriented framework ensures that the WRC continues to meet the complex and evolving needs of our service users. The centre remains a cornerstone of our stepped care model, facilitating smooth transitions between levels of care and reinforcing SPMHS' commitment to continuity, accessibility and excellence in mental health service delivery.





## Day programme attendances

SPMHS Day Service programmes	Total day programme attendances 2024
• Access to Recovery	1,265
• Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) incorporating Focused Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (FACT)	1,849
• Addictions Programmes	2,448
• Anxiety Programme	871
• Bipolar Recovery Programme	382
• Building Strength and Resilience	68
• Coping for Older Adults Programme	11
• Compassion-Focused Therapy	1,155
• Compassion-Focused Therapy for Eating Disorders	202
• Compassion-Focused Therapy for Older Adults	170
• Compassion-Focused Therapy for Psychosis	169
• Dialectical Behavioural Therapy	1,766
• Depression Recovery (including Building Healthy Self-Esteem)	717
• Emotion-Focused Therapy for Young Adults	203
• Eating Disorders programmes	1,951
• Eating Disorders Treatment Information Programme	40
• Formulation Group Therapy	531
• Group Radical Openness	1,337
• Group Schema Therapy	136
• Living Well with Mild Cognitive Impairment	72
• Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction (MBSR)	47
• Pathways to Wellness	1,631
• Psychology Skills for Adolescents	148
• Recovery Programme incorporating WRAP® (including Connections Café)	981
• Skills for Attention, Behaviour and Emotions (SABE) for Adolescents and Families	14
• SAGE	160
• Trauma Programme	396
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,720</b>

## Rights-based care and treatment

The Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act was fully implemented in 2023. The Act enshrines the position that every person has capacity, unless demonstrated otherwise, and creates an opportunity for all persons to make provisions for certain situations where their capacity might be affected and enables others to support the person in accordance with their own will and preference. SPMHS has worked hard to ensure its staff are trained, understand the requirements of the Act and are supported to ensure the rights of service users in relation to the new Act are fully vindicated and respected.

## Outcome measures

SPMHS has committed to publishing detailed outcomes measures since 2011 and this is seen as a priority for the organisation.

In publishing these outcome measures, SPMHS strives to understand the quality of the services it provides while also identifying where improvements can be made. In the 14th edition of the *Outcomes Report*, published in 2024, SPMHS presented outcomes relating to clinical care, clinical governance processes, clinical programmes and measures of service user experience. Wherever possible, validated tools are utilised throughout the *Outcomes Report*, and the choice of clinical outcome measures used is under continuous review.



## Clinical governance, quality and excellence

The three approved centres in SPMHS are inspected on an annual basis by the Mental Health Commission. SPMHS welcomes this external review of the quality of its services and has achieved consistently high compliance ratings on the annual inspection for many years. The inspection process and publication of the final inspection reports assures staff, referrers, those who fund care in SPMHS, service users and the general public that SPMHS delivers the highest standards of service provision grounded in a human rights-based approach.

All inspection reports are published on the commission's website and are available to the general public for review.

During the 2024 annual inspection of SPMHS' three approved centres, Willow Grove Adolescent Unit, achieved full compliance with all applicable rules, codes and regulations for the fifth year in a row, while St Patrick's University Hospital was found to be 97% compliant and St Patrick's Hospital, Lucan was found to be 97% compliant. These excellent results reflect the commitment of all staff working in SPMHS to delivering the highest standards of quality.





## Key service delivery developments



### Psychiatry

Consultant psychiatrists work with multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) in the provision of individually prescribed human rights-based treatment plans, tailored towards the needs of the service users. During 2024, our 23 consultants worked across our Homecare, inpatient, outpatient and day services, providing comprehensive care and treatment to people experiencing moderate to severe mental health difficulties, including presentations of complex and enduring mental illness.

### Nursing

The Nursing Department at SPMHS comprises registered psychiatric nurses working across various departments and disciplines at SPMHS. This includes nurses at ward level, in our Dean Clinics, in programme delivery at both inpatient and outpatient level, in the referral and assessment service and Homecare Nursing Hub, as well as team liaison nurses on multidisciplinary teams.

Our mental health nurses provide individual interventions to all service users, and regular group interventions both face-to-face and virtually as part of several programmes.

The Physical Health Monitoring Service commenced its initial phase in 2023, and it continued to grow in 2024, expanding to the Dean Clinics. Led by our nursing staff, this service aims to develop and deliver a designated physical health monitoring service to all inpatients of SPMHS treated with long-term psychotropic medication.

To ensure continued improvement in the quality of our nursing care, the role of Nurse Training Facilitator was established in 2024. The facilitator analyses and determines the current knowledge base of staff in areas of general nursing care and identifies and develops in-service training and education on medical care intervention for nursing staff in SPMHS. Training sessions have been conducted throughout 2024 which covered areas such as advanced cardiac care and point-of-care diagnostics.





Class of 2020

A number of initiatives come under the aegis of the Nursing Department. The Mood Disorders Team are involved in a multi-stakeholder initiative to make our programme workbooks/booklets available in a digitised, editable version accessible through Your Portal. Work is already underway to create the Bipolar Recovery Programme Booklet, and internal work is being completed to prepare the Pillars of Wellness booklet for digitisation thereafter.

In 2024, the Nursing Department continued to build relationships with colleagues elsewhere, and convened meetings with, and visits to, Atlantic Technological University (Letterkenny), Technological University Shannon (Athlone) and Dundalk IT. Tralee IT fourth-year students visited St Patrick's University Hospital in November.

Following a winning idea submitted to the SPMHS' Nursing Innovative Idea competition in 2023 for an SPMHS podcast for nurses by nurses, the Communications and Nursing Departments co-developed *Mental Health Conversations: The Nursing Series* podcast, which was launched in October 2024.

## Social Work

In 2024, the Social Work Department continued to contribute clinically to multidisciplinary teamwork and therapeutic programmes within SPMHS.

Social workers are allocated to every MDT within SPMHS, with the aim of bringing a systemic lens to the experience of service users and their families. In 2024, the team continued to contribute to the delivery of a number of day programmes and provided a regular weekly lecture for all service users.

In 2024, the Department introduced a new skills and support group in the Willow Grove Adolescent Unit for parents and guardians. The aim of this group is to help parents navigate the social, emotional and practical challenges of an inpatient admission of their child. In addition, recruitment began for a new support group for families of those receiving care through the Eating Disorder Service.



The Social Work Department continued to lead an organisational working group aimed at enhancing the inclusivity of care for service users who are members of the LGBTQ+ community. The working group has partnered with external organisations such as Gendercare and LGBT Ireland to develop an eLearning module for staff which will launch in 2025.



The Department also continues to contribute to the work of the Women's Mental Health Network, a SPMHS collaboration with the National Women's Council that aims to advance interdisciplinary and multi-agency collaboration around women's mental health issues. In addition, professional training was provided by the Social Work Department to external agencies, aimed at improving responses to mental health service users experiencing domestic violence and abuse.

In 2024, the Social Work Department, in conjunction with the Communications Department, successfully applied for philanthropic funding to collaborate with Safe Ireland to produce a bi-directional 'toolkit' for domestic violence services and mental health services.

## Psychology

In 2024, the Psychology Department continued to deliver high-quality psychological care across inpatient, outpatient, Homecare and day programmes. Psychologists on MDTs provided psychological formulations and interventions for inpatients and those attending Homecare. These interventions included trauma-informed therapy, neuropsychological assessments and an expanded pilot for autism mental health assessments, responding to rising demand.

Psychology day programme attendances reached an all-time high in 2024, with 6,391 half-day attendances. High-demand programmes such as Dialectical Behaviour Therapy, Group Radical Openness (GRO), Compassion-Focused Therapy and the Temple Formulation Programme (TFP) continued to grow. Resources were strategically reallocated from one Compassion-Focused Therapy group to reduce the Trauma Programme waitlist from 24 to 14 months. Similarly, wait times for GRO and TFP improved thanks to staffing increases from previous years.

The psychology team delivered a number of specialised older adult programmes during 2024, including SAGE, Compassion-Focused Therapy for Older Adults and Living Well with Mild Cognitive Impairment. These day programmes also expanded referral pathways to include GPs, external consultants and community services. Adolescent services, including the Psychology Skills Group, also expanded to accept external referrals. The Dialectical Behaviour Therapy team reached a milestone of completing their 100th group cycle and participated in public outreach through media appearances.

Service user involvement remained central to service development. Former participants in Compassion-Focused Therapy for Eating Disorders (CFT-E) and Dialectical Behaviour Therapy contributed to new programme cycles, inspiring new attendees. Service users also co-developed new evaluation tools such as a CFT-E questionnaire and offered feedback that continues to inform clinical practice.



The department actively collaborated with the Communications Department to deliver public webinars and promote psychological therapies. Our psychologists contributed to national and international publications, including studies on psychosis, eating disorders, emotion regulation and group therapies. Notable contributions included journal articles, book chapters and systematic reviews. Training continued in areas such as CFT-E, Emotion-Focused Therapy and GRO, with psychologists teaching in clinical programmes and contributing to peer-reviewed journals.

## Pharmacy

SPMHS pharmacists provide individual interventions to all service users and group interventions as part of a number of programmes. During 2024, the Pharmacy Department reviewed medication safety and medicines information projects initiated prior to 2024 (including use of the Choice and Medication and What's My Drug weblinks) and recorded webinars and blogs, which were available on [stpatricks.ie](http://stpatricks.ie). Pharmacists also reviewed the Medication Management Care Plans in eSwift and templates for physical monitoring required with Agomelatine and for pharmacist assessment and review of dietary supplements were added, along with edits to broaden the scope of antipsychotic monitoring and to add information on the new SPMHS Cardiometabolic Diet Patient Information Leaflet.

In promoting medication safety, the Pharmacy Department continued to produce the SPMHS *Medication Safety Newsletter* which provides opportunities for learning and updates for clinical staff, and positive feedback to that effect has been received. They also led on activities for World Medication Safety Day on the 17 September when, with the help of the Communications Department, workshops were held with service users on the theme of shared decision-making.

Pharmacy staff also continued to support, and actively participate in, research and academic input including Prescribing Observatory for Mental Health-UK audits and lecturing for pharmacy, nursing, and medical staff and students through SPMHS, University College Cork and Trinity College Dublin.

## Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapy continues to be a valued part of the multidisciplinary team, with the department providing group and/or individual interventions to approximately 30% of all inpatient hospital admissions and service users attending Homecare. In-person group therapy sessions are facilitated on the Old Age Psychiatry Unit, the Special Care Unit, the Young Adult Programme, the Alcohol and Chemical Dependency and Dual Diagnosis programmes and the Eating Disorder Programme.





The department also facilitates virtual group interventions on a number of clinical programmes such as the Anxiety and Depression programmes.

The Occupational Therapy Department also provides intervention to services users in the Dean Clinics.

In response to an increasing number of referrals for service users with suspected or diagnosed neurodiversity, the department explored facilitating a group to assist service users with executive functioning deficits related to neurodiversity. The group was approved by the Clinical Governance Committee, with the first cycle commencing in 2025 .



The demand for creative arts therapies intervention continues to increase year on year. Music therapy and art therapy groups are facilitated as part of a number of inpatient and day programmes.

A dance and movement therapy group continues to be facilitated on the Dean Swift ward and Special Care Unit.

The Disability and Accessibility working group, with representatives from all departments across SPMHS, continued its work exploring and enhancing accessibility for services users who may have a disability other than, or in addition, to psychosocial disability.

## General activities



The inpatient activities programme introduced several new activities in 2024 including Zumba and nature-based mindfulness meditation. The creative activity rooms (pottery, art and craft rooms) and other on-site groups such as gardening groups, mindful yoga, bingo, quizzes, Lego group, calligraphy, candle-making, choir and yoga Nidra are available for service users to access. All virtual groups are available to inpatient service users and service users attending Homecare.



## Digital and telehealth service developments

SPMHS has always sought to best utilise technology to aid in our service delivery. In 2024, we continued implementation of the *Digital Transformation Strategy 2023-2027*. The ambitious five-year strategy plans for the enhancement of digital health technologies within SPMHS and will see us continue to consolidate our digital health technologies across the organisation, as well as investing strongly in technology-enabled care to support the delivery of remote services. Through technological innovation and digital transformation, underpinned by our “Digital by Design - Digital First” mindset, the goal is to have a suite of digital services that allow people across the country convenient access.

eSwift digital enablers continued to be developed; changes implemented aligned with the requirements to enable new clinical services, streamline existing services and enable Mental Health Commission regulatory compliance requirements.

Weekly meetings were held during 2024 with the Homecare Hub nurse manager to derive requirements and deliver solutions to enable the Homecare Hub nurse management processes.

The success of hybrid psychotherapy sessions saw three additional MS Teams hybrid screens procured, two more for SPUH and one for SPL. How-to guidance documentation was also published while how-to-use instruction sessions were supported by the digital health team.

## Your Portal

The right of service users to access their own information is enshrined in the Irish Data Protection Act 2018, EU GDPR and is in line with the European Union’s Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons (UNCPRD) 2006. In keeping with SPMHS rights-based approach to service user care and treatment, SPMHS has committed to enabling service user access to key information and to share information and communicate securely with their care teams via its dedicated online service user portal, Your Portal.





In 2024, we continued to expand Your Portal through increasing awareness and engagement with both clinicians and service users. The stpatricks.ie website content relating to Your Portal is developed in collaboration with our Remote Care User Advisory Forum, our Communications Department, and our Service User IT Support Team (SUITS). Service user registrations continued to grow in 2024, with 3,195 service users confirmed as registered to use Your Portal at the end of 2024.

During 2024, work commenced to digitise clinical programme workbooks and make these available within Your Portal. Two clinical teams engaged in the project to deliver the Pillars of Wellness and Bipolar Recovery programmes. Workbooks are provided to service users participating in the clinical programmes to facilitate access to programme-specific information. This supports learning about therapeutic techniques and offers tools for guided activities both within group sessions and independently outside of them.

In 2024, the ability for clinicians to enter service user outcomes information directly into eSwift was enhanced. This allows for all programme outcome responses, regardless of format received from service users, to be collated and analysed. Several Your Portal questionnaires were developed during 2024 including the Adult ADHD Self-Report Scale, Ritvo Autism Asperger Diagnostic Scale and the Autism Spectrum Quotient.

## Qlik data analytics

Qlik is a business intelligence software solution utilised by SPMHS to develop and deliver its data analytics since 2018. Qlik provides apps which track clinical activity across all of SPMHS' services to deliver the same high-level data as other reporting processes. Using Qlik as the primary reference means a standard methodology is used to calculate activity statistics, which refresh each day, and the context of the data can be explored and analysed to provide a higher value than a statistic alone.

In 2024, work continued in the development of Qlik to be the main point of reference for tracking all clinical activity using electronic health record (eSwift) real-time data, and a number of new apps for a range of clinical programmes were developed on the platform.

## Smart D8

SPMHS renewed its partnership with Smart D8 in 2024. Smart D8 is an ongoing initiative that focuses on the health and wellbeing of the local community, bringing together partners from academia (Trinity College Dublin, National College of Art and Design); research; healthcare (SPMHS, St James Hospital, Children's Health Ireland); the community; and the technology sector (the Tyndall Institute, Digital Hub, Guinness Enterprise Centre) to work collaboratively together to achieve this.

SPMHS participated in the evaluation of submissions to the Smart D8 pilot call in April 2024 and the Smart D8 Showcase Event, which took place in the National College of Art and Design (NCAD) in October 2024.

## Data protection



Data privacy and cybersecurity is of the utmost importance to SPMHS and a commitment to both data privacy and cybersecurity are the principles underpinning our *Digital Transformation Strategy*. Aware of the highly personal and sensitive nature of the health data we handle, we seek to meet our obligations under all relevant data protection legislation. This commitment is reflected in the regular implementation of new security initiatives and the ongoing upskilling of our staff to ensure the highest standards of information security.



All Data Subject Access Requests in 2024 were processed by the Data Protection Office in compliance with our obligations under Section 91(1) of the Data Protection Act which gives further effect to the GDPR and internal SPMHS Data Protection Policies. In 2024, we received 389 data subject access requests (SAR) which was on par with the 388 SARs received in 2023. All requests were completed within the calendar month GDPR deadline or within the further two-month extension where the respective SAR was applicable under section 12(3) of the GDPR. The highest volume of requests (201) came from service users, followed by solicitor requests (45), health insurers (39) and family members of deceased service users (25).

A Data Incident register continued to be maintained in 2024 for all data incidents and data breaches, and each incident was managed in line with our Data Breach Management Policy. A total of 57 data incidents were reported internally in 2024 compared to 81 in 2023. All data incidents were risk-assessed by the Data Protection Office (DPO) in SPMHS and 29 were established, after investigation by the DPO, as a data breach; of which only one reached the threshold as reportable to the Data Protection Commission (DPC). This represents a 42% decrease in data incidents and 65.5% decrease in data breaches compared to the previous year. Significant efforts were made by all members of the Information Governance Committee Working Group in 2024 to achieve these improvements, for example, reviews of data incidents and mitigations to prevent reoccurrence by the Information Governance Committee (IGC) on a monthly basis.

In 2024, the DPO continued to implement an information governance programme in line with the organisation's Information Governance Framework and in collaboration with the Information Governance Committee. This work is focused on ensuring the organisation remains compliant with data protection legislation.

A number of Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) were carried out in 2024 and work continued to ensure that SPMHS meets its obligations under the GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018, Health Research Regulations and all other applicable statutory instruments. Staff continued to complete Data Protection Staff Awareness Training for 2024. In addition, the DPO provided several data protection awareness meetings with individuals and services in 2024.

## Cybersecurity

As the role of technology in society continues to grow, and its importance in educating and supporting those with mental health difficulties becoming more significant, SPMHS has invested heavily in technology. The use of technology-enabled care is firmly embedded in our delivery of clinical services, as well as supporting operations across the organisation.



In 2024, we continued to focus on implementing the initiatives recommended in the Accenture Information Security Roadmap to increase our alignment with the ISO 27001 standard. This report is a summary of projects and security initiatives undertaken in 2024, to address controls within the ISO standard, as well as initiatives identified by Accenture in the ISO Security Roadmap.





## Human resources

SPMHS delivers care and services to our service users through our 700 staff, working across a range of disciplines, both clinical and non-clinical. To ensure we are always able to deliver the highest standards of care, we are committed to creating and maintaining a working environment within which all staff are empowered and encouraged to reach the fullest extent of their potential. We realise this vision by working in partnership with the wider SPMHS organisation to provide leadership, support and guidance in the development and implementation of the policies, procedures and practices required to assist SPMHS in the achievement of our clinical and commercial objectives. Our *Human Resources Management Strategy* is built on this foundation.

Part of meeting these objectives is our being able to respond to recruitment challenges in a timely manner and in maintaining and developing our existing skills base.

To this end, the Human Resources Department continued to lead and support the organisation in meeting recruitment challenges across all departments and disciplines against the backdrop of an increasingly competitive labour market.

Our staff turnover rate was 2.48%, representing a decrease on 2023 (4.10%). SPMHS has embraced the positive benefits of remote working, both for the organisation and staff. SPMHS is committed to allowing staff to achieve and maintain improved work-life balance through the continued utilisation of remote working to the benefit of both the organisation and our staff.

## KeepWell Mark

In 2024, SPMHS underwent a full re-assessment for the KeepWell mark, an accreditation from Ibec that demonstrates an organisation's commitment to health and wellbeing of its employees. SPMHS retained the Keep Well Mark and again feedback

was very positive, recognising the importance placed by SPMHS on the overall wellbeing and constructive management of employees.



# Advocacy and education

**At St Patrick's Mental Health Services (SPMHS), an essential part of our remit is educating the wider public on mental health, and advocating for the rights of those who experience mental health difficulties. Central to this is ensuring mental healthcare, prevention strategies and promotion efforts are grounded in human rights and adhere to key human rights conventions.**

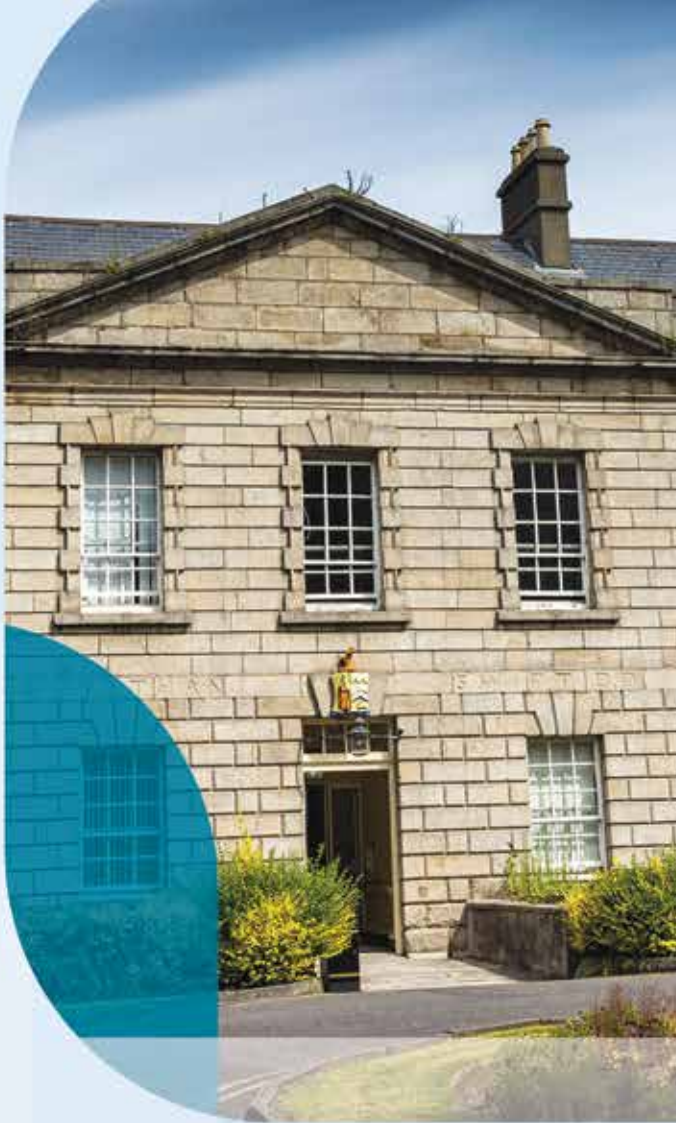
The advocacy endeavours of SPMHS serve to complement our clinical work and are an important contributor to our broader remit of helping to build a society in which the rights of those experiencing mental health difficulties are protected, and in which the stigma attached to mental health difficulties is combatted. By enhancing general understanding of mental health, we can aid in reducing stigma, help raise awareness and improve responsiveness to the mental health needs of all sections of society. Our diverse spectrum of annual awareness campaigns and initiatives continue to have significant reach, helping to bring our mission to life, while enhancing and elevating the discourse around mental health.

The *Advocacy Strategy 2023 - 2027* underpins all advocacy activities, as well as the continued advancement of our Advocacy Centre. The objectives of the strategy are fundamentally aligned with European and international child and adult mental health advocacy goals and clearly reflect our overarching vision of a society where all people are given the opportunity to live mentally healthy lives. Efforts to progress the strategy continued in 2024, with the Advocacy Committee meeting on 10 occasions. Our Advocacy Committee also contributes to all relevant consultations issued by Oireachtas committees, Government departments and other national bodies.

We remain committed to building relationships and consolidating a partnership network of mental health organisations, while supporting existing partners and advocacy alliances' work and implementing partner projects.

Our Communications Department strategy incorporates a pro-active traditional and digital media calendar of activity, positioning SPMHS as a trusted source of both news and expertise on mental health matters of national and international interest. Last year this resulted in more than 390 media items featuring SPMHS across all forms of media, including print, online and broadcast media. This element of our wider public outreach is complemented by our many active online channels, which help drive our various advocacy and awareness campaigns.

The numbers visiting our website remained strong in 2024, and our combined social media audience also grew. Analytics showed that people spent more time engaged with our content, showing that the website was effective in capturing and keeping users' attention. The Care and Treatment section once again garnered the most views, accounting for more than one quarter of all views. One-eighth of all views went to the Media Centre, highlighting a clear public interest in quality, informed content.



## Education Centre

We are committed to the development of an interactive education centre as a core component of the national centre for mentally healthy living, which is being developed within the historic building of St Patrick's University Hospital on our Dublin 8 campus. The aim of the centre is to tackle misinformation about mental health; challenge stigma; and educate people, particularly young people, about the practical tools we can all use throughout our lives to support our wellbeing and mental health. The centre will also immerse visitors in the history of St Patrick's Hospital founder, Jonathan Swift, and the evolution of mental healthcare.

Consultations took place with key stakeholders including the Education Centre Student Advisory Committee, TY students and service user advisors (Service User and Supporters [SUAS] Council and the Service User Advisory Network [SUAN]).

A content co-creation workshop took place with staff in SPMHS during July, and two historians were consulted as part of the development process for the historical component of the centre. The plan for the new schools programme to be delivered through the Education Centre was advanced, with two new workshops and seven new sessions piloted with students.

## Advocacy Centre

During 2024, work progressed on drawing up a three-year plan for the forthcoming Advocacy Centre, including an implementation plan for 2025 aligned with the overall national centre plan and timelines. A plan for an 'Advocacy' room within the Education Centre was developed, with proposed interactive educational activities based on the Council of Europe's Compass – Manual for Human Rights Education for Young People. Two sessions were facilitated by the Advocacy Manager as part of the TY programme on the topic of mental health and human rights.



## Advocating for human rights

A total of 16 consultations were contributed to by SPMHS during 2024. This included input to a consultation and a follow-on focus group on a new national mental health research strategy, and three World Health Organization (WHO) consultations on global plans for non-communicable diseases and mental health promotion, climate and health, and on draft standards for children and adolescent mental health services in the European Region. An impact review of 24 months of submissions and contributions to consultations from July 2020-June 2022 was completed in January 2024 to update the impact review completed in 2023.

Over 30 online and in-person events and meetings relating to mental health, disability and/or advocacy activities were attended by members of the Advocacy Committee over 2024 to represent SPMHS; contribute to collaborative advocacy efforts; and build on the network of mental health organisation partnerships established. SPMHS contributed to numerous members advocacy meetings, activities and working groups convened by the Children's Rights Alliance, Mental Health Reform and the Social Policy Working Group.

During 2024, SPMHS joined the Climate and Health Alliance (CHA), the first national mental health service provider to do so, and became a co-signatory to the CHA-HSE Joint Declaration of Action on planetary and human health. SPMHS continued its participation as a member of the WHO Pan-European Mental Health Coalition, including attendance at a two-day online workshop on leadership and service transformation in mental health; an online event on digital transformation in mental health; the online launch of a new WHO Europe Stigma reduction toolkit; and contributing to a consultation on development of Europe-wide standards for child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS).

SPMHS contributed to two WHO consultations on the global plan of action on climate and health, and the global action plan on non-communicable diseases including mental health promotion. SPMHS also continued its participation in the Global Mental Health Advocacy Network, remotely attending webinars and the annual Global Mental Health Advocacy Forum. A survey for staff was circulated in November to gauge staff awareness of and engagement with the WHO Quality Rights e-training, which SPMHS has publicly pledged to support as a means of advancing rights-based mental health services in Ireland.

SPMHS completed advocacy actions in our capacity as a human rights-based healthcare service, calling for respect of international law and human rights, and especially children's rights, and highlighting population mental health harms in relation to the bombardment of Gaza. This included a letter in February to the Israeli Ambassador signed by members of SPMHS staff, and letters from the CEO to political party leaders in Ireland in November calling for prioritisation of advocacy for human rights and children's rights in the region, during and after the general election. A social coffee morning staff fundraiser in aid of the UNICEF Gaza Crisis Emergency Appeal took place on International Human Rights Day.

Our philanthropic efforts were ongoing throughout 2024. Philanthropic project evaluations were completed with the National Parents' Council (NPC) for the mental health awareness training programme for parents, and with the ISPCC for their Guided Digital Self-Care programmes for children and their carers.





At least 104 NPC online and in-person training sessions were delivered over 2024 (figures to Mid-November); these were attended by 1,872 parents, and 94% of those who completed post-session evaluation reported feeling “more confident in supporting their child’s mental health”. The ISPCC project comprises three online programmes, with satisfaction ratings of 98% reported across all three.



A collaborative philanthropic project with Safe Ireland to develop a training toolkit on domestic violence and mental health was re-initiated following a hiatus and regular project planning meetings were held in 2024, with a Memorandum of Understanding prepared, and recruitment of a project research assistant following in 2025. The Exchange House initiative also continued, with one day per week of cognitive behavioural therapy to recipients of care linked to Exchange House.

## Undertaking critical awareness-raising work

In line with our education objective, a comprehensive and pro-active media strategy was implemented throughout 2024, with SPMHS staff and former service users regularly contributing to media articles and interviews, sharing their insights and expertise to promote positive mental health and tackle stigma. Mental health education and awareness among the general population were promoted and enhanced through some key campaigns run via SPMHS’ digital and traditional media channels including the annual publication of results from the Attitudes to Mental Health and Stigma Survey; the roll-out of a World Mental Health Day campaign; and the implementation of a dedicated Research Communications Strategy to enhance knowledge and awareness of the importance of research in mental health.

A total of 203,967 users visited the stpatricks.ie website in 2024. While this represents a decrease of 12% from 2023, these numbers are still strong, showing that a significant number of people continue to visit the website and engage with the content.



Some 86,654 users and 176,324 views were recorded on the Walk in My Shoes website in 2024. This marked a 10% decrease (from 96,970) and 2% increase (from 173,193) on 2023, respectively.

While there were some year-on-year declines, several trends point to opportunities for growth and refinement, with strong foundations to build upon. Organic search continued to be the largest source of website traffic and we will continue to focus on content optimisation and high value keywords to drive more engagement with our website.

Our array of social media channels includes SPMHS and WIMS' individual Facebook and X channels, while SPMHS and WIMS share an Instagram channel, and SPMHS also runs a LinkedIn channel. In 2024, the number of published posts across these channels increased by 8% in 2024 to reach 1,312 posts.

The combined audience of SPMHS and WIMS' social media channels grew by almost 3% in 2024. LinkedIn and Instagram had the biggest increases in audience with rises of 1,099 and 800 respectively. The X audience growth rate dropped by 283% compared to 2023; this could be linked to the overall fall in X users and widespread uncertainty around the platform and the associated data security and privacy concerns.

The organisation operates five separate digital mailing lists; the SPMHS general public and GP network lists, the WIMS general mailing list and the WIMS primary school and secondary school lists. By the end of 2024, there were a total of 13,418 subscribers to SPMHS' general public and GP digital mailing lists and to WIMS' general public, primary school and secondary school mailing lists. This marked a net increase of 790 subscribers, or a 6.2% growth rate. A total of 38 email campaigns were issued across the lists in 2024; 10 more than in 2023. The Mailchimp account for these lists sits in the "Medical, Dental and Healthcare" industry; emails sent from accounts in this industry currently have an average 34.6% open rate, 2.8% clickthrough rate and 0.25% unsubscribe rate. Combined, the five lists in the account outperform metrics for average open and click rates, at 37.1% and 4.9% respectively, with the average unsubscribe rate sitting at 0.35%, slightly above the industry average.

## Women's Mental Health Network

The Women's Mental Health Network (WMHN) is now in its seventh year and is a joint initiative developed by SPMHS and the National Women's Council of Ireland. It functions as a forum for information-sharing and networking as part of efforts to advance interdisciplinary and multi-agency collaboration on women's mental health issues.



(L-R): Elaine Donnelly, Head of Social Work at SPMHS and Louise O'Leary, Advocacy Manager, SPMHS

Coordination of the WMHN with the National Women's Council was consolidated with regular meetings over the year. Membership of the WMHN was reviewed and updated, and remains steady at over 450 members, with the WMHN LinkedIn group growing to 78. Four members newsletters were sent during the year and two WMHN events took place; an online networking event in April and an in-person event launching a National Women's Council Report on perinatal mental health, which included a presentation by the Advocacy Manager on the WMHN and facilitation of a networking session.

The Advocacy Manager and Head of Social Work held an awareness-raising stand for staff in November in support of the UN Women's 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence campaign, sharing information and resources about domestic violence in the context of mental health services.



## GP Information Programme

The GP Information Programme continued to run throughout 2024, helping to inform GPs about changes to services, providing educational support to GPs for managing mental health presentations in their surgeries, and encouraging GPs to attend or engage with various SPMHS online events and resources.



The GP Webinar Series, continued throughout 2024 with four webinars hosted on the topics of:

- Assessment and management of ADHD in children/adolescents.
- Overcontrol and its impact on mental health.
- Psychological therapies for older adult mental health difficulties.
- Understanding binge eating disorder.



There were 403 total registrations and 192 attendances across the four webinars, with 1,443 views of webinar event posts on the SPMHS website. Thirty social posts promoting the GP Webinar Series recorded 391,928 impressions, 7,476 engagements, and 1,964 link clicks.

## Annual Attitudes to Mental Health and Stigma survey

Each year SPMHS commissions Amárach Research to conduct a survey to track awareness of, and attitudes towards, mental health in Ireland. The 2024 iteration of the survey was informed by SUAS. The results showed that while stigma is improving in many areas, people's willingness to disclose suicidal thoughts has remained relatively unchanged over the last number of years.

The survey of over 1,000 adults also revealed that over half of respondents had experienced a mental health difficulty, with two in three reporting to have received treatment for same. Nine in ten respondents agreed that anyone could experience mental health difficulties. However, rates of self-stigma appear to remain at a high level - while nearly one in four adults would consider it a sign of weakness if they sought help for mental health, only one in ten would consider it a sign of weakness if a friend or family member did so.

In line with these findings, SPMHS ran a campaign in December to remind everyone of the importance of checking in on their own mental health and the mental health of their loved ones, particularly during the Christmas season, which can be a stressful time for many. A targeted media campaign ran alongside digital activity and received widespread coverage, both regionally and nationally, being featured in the *Sunday Independent* and *The Irish Times*, and on RTÉ.

## Walk In My Shoes (WIMS)

**Walk in My Shoes is a key awareness-raising and education campaign of St Patrick's Mental Health Services.**

Throughout 2024, WIMS continued to develop new resources and run initiatives, which were guided by an advisory panel of students, teachers and parents. As work progresses on the development of the new interactive Education Centre, WIMS continues to be in a transitional phase, with 50% of the team's (1.6 WTE) time in 2024 dedicated to research and development for this project.

### WIMS key supporter



During 2024, Cormac Ryan, a physiotherapist and endurance cyclist who is also a former minor and under 21s hurler for Dublin GAA, acted as the WIMS Key Supporter, proving to be a passionate and energetic ally of SPMHS and its WIMS campaign. Cormac has spoken openly about his journey with depression and an eating disorder following serious cardiac surgery.

During 2024, Cormac shared a number of posts on Instagram and Twitter/X profile around the importance of minding yourself and shared a video post to WIMS Instagram Story for #MindYourSelfie Day. He also signposted his online audience and WIMS audiences to helpful resources and the library section of the WIMS website for Safer Internet Day.

### #MindYourSelfie

The 2024 #MindYourSelfie Day campaign saw the development of a new self-care timetable resource for primary schools. Members of the public were encouraged to get involved with the campaign by sharing photos on social media and using the MYS hashtag.

### Transition Year programme

The sought-after Transition Year (TY) programme continued in 2024. A total of 350 applications were received for the 2024/25 TY programme, with 115 students offered a place. Successful students attended a five-day hybrid programme, with the first day taking place onsite in St Patrick's University Hospital and the remainder of the programme taking place via MS teams. The programme received hugely positive feedback from students, parents and teachers and a graduation ceremony took place in May 2024.

New content for the TY programme is currently in development, in line with Education Centre programme development, with new sessions trialled in three programmes from September 2024. A staff co-creation and development feedback session took place in July 2024, with key stakeholders within SPMHS offering feedback on proposed content.





## Frame of Mind

In 2024, WIMS marked the tenth anniversary of the Frame of Mind short-film competition. To celebrate the milestone, WIMS partnered with Fís Eireann/Screen Ireland for the 2024 competition. Screen Ireland provided 50 students with the opportunity to complete a short film production module prior to entering the competition. Categories in 2024 included short film secondary school, short film Further Education and Training (FET) Centres including Youthreach and a TikTok category, which was open to all students.

An awards ceremony and screening was held in the Irish Film Institute (IFI) with actress Alisha Weir (*Matilda the Musical*) present as special guest and speaker. The winning entries of both the secondary school and FET Centre (including Youthreach) categories were shown on the Screen Ireland short-film player as an added element to their prize. There were almost 2,000 views of Frame of Mind content over three key periods of the competition and 1.4 million impressions (organic and paid) on social media. It also garnered significant attention in traditional media channels.



*'Matilda' star Alisha Weir with 2024 Frame of Mind winning students, Hayley Mulvany and Fiadh McColgan from St Finian's College in Westmeath*

## Mission Possible School Achievement Awards

The Mission Possible School Achievements Award competition launched in October 2024, and winners were announced at an award ceremony in February 2025. The competition focused not only on the great work schools are already doing, but the initiatives they want to do in the future in order to support wellbeing and positive mental health in their schools. A total of 27 schools entered in advance of the competition deadline, with 11 entries shortlisted for review by the judging panel.

## School Portal and resources

The WIMS School Portal is a secure, private, online platform for primary and secondary teachers and school staff in Ireland to highlight and share what they are doing in their schools, classrooms and communities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing. The portal aims to be a central hub of ideas and resources to help schools across the country in their wellbeing and mental health promotion.

WIMS received over 150 requests to join the portal during 2024, with 119 requests approved. A total of 28 new resources were uploaded in 2024 and these included a new self-care timetable for primary school students, which included seven daily activities to promote wellbeing among children, and an Autumn Nature workbook for primary school students. Two new resources were released by WIMS to mark International Volunteer Day in December – a resource for primary schools and a resource for secondary schools that explore the positive effect of volunteering on mental health and wellbeing.

## Other key activities and events

**Throughout 2024, SPMHS and WIMS hosted a total of 18 online, hybrid or in-person events, providing opportunities for the public, schools, healthcare professionals, staff and service users to hear and learn from experts in mental health and to build connections and network with each other. All events were well-attended and positive feedback was received from attendees.**

## Podcast series

Following a winning idea submitted to the SPMHS' Nursing Innovative Idea competition in 2023 for an SPMHS podcast for nurses by nurses, *Mental Health Conversations: The Nursing Series* podcast was developed and published in 2024. The podcast was developed as a six-part series to explore the rewards and challenges of the role of a mental health nurse; the impact that nurses can make in people's lives; and where psychiatric nursing is going in the future. As well as discussing psychiatric nursing in a general sense, the series also aimed to showcase a number of the speciality services in SPMHS that nurses are active in, as well as hearing the service user perspective of receiving nursing care.

The series launched on World Mental Health Day (10 October), with new episodes released every fortnight thereafter, with all six live by mid-December. Between the series launch and year end, the series trailer and episodes gained 1,649 downloads across streaming services.



(L-R): Aoife Farrington, Clinical Placement Coordinator, SPMHS and Shane Kirwan, Nurse Practice Development Coordinator, SPMHS launch Mental Health Conversations: The Nursing Series

## First Fortnight

As part of its continued collaboration with mental health festival, First Fortnight, SPMHS hosted its first in-person Cistin event since 2019 in January 2024. Cistin is an evening of music and storytelling that celebrates community and connection through music, poetry and performance. An art workshop for service users also took place, and attendees were guided through making their own fully functioning lantern, taking inspiration from Silva Lumina by Tom Meskill, a lantern exhibition of human-plant hybrids presented in the National Botanic Gardens.

## Eating Disorders Awareness Week



To mark Eating Disorders Awareness Week, the multidisciplinary Eating Disorders Programme team at SPMHS hosted a webinar exploring eating disorder recovery and identifying the signs of eating disorders.

## Art exhibition and panel discussion



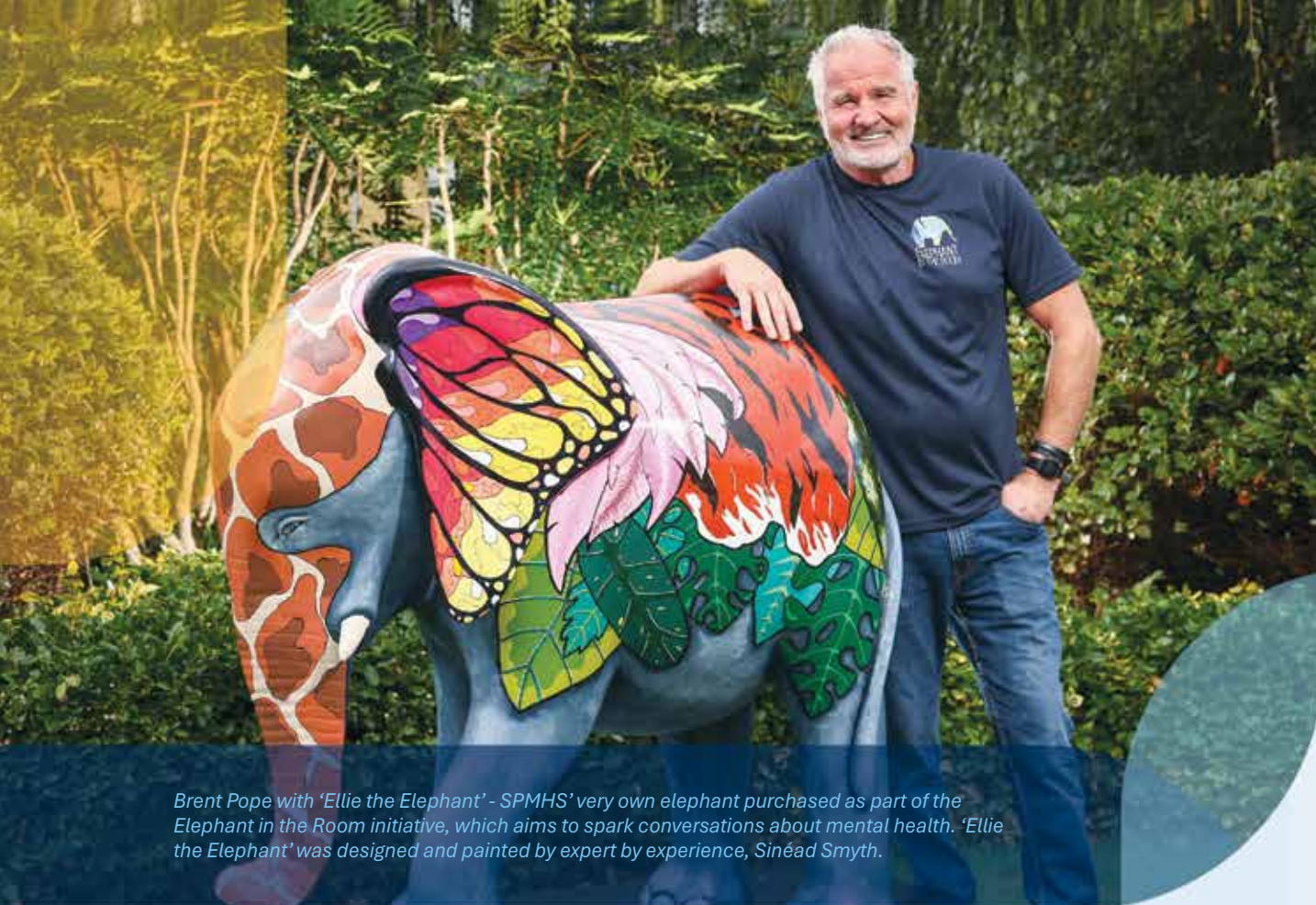
SPMHS hosted a temporary photography exhibition, Age is a Privilege, Unless you Forget!, centred on the theme of dementia, as well as a panel discussion to open up important conversations about stigma, caring for someone with dementia and support for family and loved ones of those with dementia.

## Recovery Festival



For 2024, SPMHS' annual wellness-themed event celebrating recovery was inspired by the Olympic Games and included a games area, wellness workshops, arts and crafts sessions, inflatable games zone, a live DJ and refreshments. Almost 400 staff, service users and family members attended the event, and feedback was overwhelmingly positive. 100% of survey respondents who attended agreed that the event celebrated recovery in mental health and promoted positive mental health and wellbeing.





*Brent Pope with 'Ellie the Elephant' - SPMHS' very own elephant purchased as part of the Elephant in the Room initiative, which aims to spark conversations about mental health. 'Ellie the Elephant' was designed and painted by expert by experience, Sinéad Smyth.*

## World Mental Health Day

A public campaign to celebrate World Mental Health Day 2024 ran during the week beginning October 7. The campaign shared existing workplace wellbeing resources and tools from SPMHS for employees and employers in line with the theme of this year's World Mental Health Day – "It's time to prioritise mental health in the workplace". As part of its World Mental Health Day schedule of events, SPMHS hosted an event with Brent Pope and former service user Sinéad Smyth to officially launch SPMHS' very own elephant purchased as part of the Elephant in the Room initiative, a national campaign to start conversations around mental health.

## Founder's Day

The annual Founder's Day conference is held each year to recognise the legacy of SPMHS' founder Jonathan Swift and to promote the SPMHS brand of excellence in mental healthcare. In the lead-up to the 2024 Founder's Day conference on unlocking the potential of later life and older adult mental health, an in-person practical skills-building and information session for older adults was held in St Patrick's University Hospital.

This event focused on ways to promote positive mental health in later life and how to access support services. It shared information from various older adult support services about available resources and advocacy for older adults.



The 2024 Founder's Day online conference explored the theme of older adult mental health, specifically focusing on unlocking the potential of later life. Attendees benefited from expert knowledge on older adult mental health to create open dialogue on important issues such as proactive planning for mental health in later life, strategies to promote positive ageing and advocacy for older adults.



# Research and training

**At St Patrick's Mental Health Services (SPMHS), our commitment to delivering the highest quality mental healthcare is grounded in a responsibility to conduct research that supports this mission and contributes positively to the broader mental health landscape.**

Our Academic Institute, which focuses on advancing research, is a key tenet of our wider remit, complementing our everyday clinical work and mental health advocacy efforts, as well as having a broader societal impact. Through our *Academic Institute Research Strategy*, we ensure the research we are involved in is high-quality, transparent and ethical by making it publicly accessible and open to scrutiny, and our *Research Communications Strategy* aims to increase understanding of the importance of research among service users, carers, families and the public.

The *Academic Institute Research Strategy 2023-2027* is closely aligned with the organisational strategy, *The Future in Mind*, and seeks to address both the opportunities and the challenges in conducting research at SPMHS. The strategy promotes a positive culture for service-user led research, with the idea that with the right supports for researchers, we can continue to make significant contributions to the knowledge of and treatment of people whom we serve. Through continuous consultation with staff, service user and carer representatives throughout 2024, the Academic Institute has used the below five identified priorities to help guide its mission:

- Establish a framework for research governance
- Provide clear and supportive pathways to conduct research
- Devise new ways to communicate research
- Develop research partnerships and resources
- Prioritise public and patient involvement in research.

During 2024, the Academic Institute Clinical Advisory Group met on four separate occasions and the Steering group met twice to discuss and implement the above priorities. The Academic Institute also held regular meetings with the Communications Department to devise plans to promote SPMHS' academic activities, thereby increasing the impact of our research outputs. As part of the *Research Communications Strategy*, two media campaigns were carried out to highlight a new research partnership between SPMHS and University College Cork (UCC) and also the publication of a study from SPMHS and University College Cork sharing guidelines for antipsychotic-induced weight gain. Quarterly research bulletins were also published during 2024 and made available to a public audience via [stpatricks.ie](http://stpatricks.ie) and promoted on social media.

## Research governance

Central to the Academic Institute is the establishment of a research governance framework in line with national developments. This framework sets up the context for the development of an appropriate environment of research that will place service users, their families and carers at the centre of research activity, while supporting our staff and enabling the organisation to comply with ethical, legal and regulatory requirements. The enhanced research governance structures will help ensure a consolidation of SPMHS research efforts and delivery of the research strategy.





The research office at the Academic Institute has played a pivotal multi-functional role in ensuring research registration, approval and monitoring processes are streamlined; researchers are fully supported; and a comprehensive repository of research is maintained. Throughout 2024, the Institute continued to consolidate real-time research outputs, projects commenced and ongoing, as well as any funding awarded to our researchers.

The Academic Institute has worked across all departments to support the review and renewal of Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) between SPMHS and academic departments, with the aim of promoting educational and research opportunities between institutions. This includes agreements with our pharmacy department and UCC and Trinity College Dublin (TCD); our Nursing Department and TCD, our Medical Department and TCD, our Occupational Therapy Department and TCD and our Psychology Department and University College Dublin.

An Education and Training committee has been set up to track and monitor these MOUs.

*(L-R): Gráinne Donohue, Academic Institute Programme Manager, St Patrick's Mental Health Services; Prof Laura Sahm, Vice Dean of the School of Pharmacy, University College Cork; Prof Paul Fearon, Medical Director, St Patrick's Mental Health Services; Ita Fitzgerald, Senior Pharmacist, St Patrick's Mental Health Services; Ciara Ni Dhubhlaing, Chief Pharmacist, St Patrick's Mental Health Services; Prof Brendan Griffin, Professor in Pharmaceutics at the School of Pharmacy, University College Cork; and Tom Maher, Director of Services, St Patrick's Mental Health Services*

The Academic Institute also contributed to national consultations on the development of a National Mental Health Research Strategy, published in December 2024. This will continue into 2025 as the Health Research Board has announced a funding call to develop a national mental health research collaborative network and the Academic Institute will lead on SPMHS' contribution to this collaboration.

The Academic Institute also continues to facilitate researchers to avail of the PPI panel made available through the Steering Group Committee. Throughout 2024, staff have made considerable use of this key resource for their research projects.





## St Patrick's Institutional Repository (SPIRE)

Following a thorough research and consultation process, in 2024, the Academic Institute began work on developing and implementing St Patrick's Institutional Repository (SPIRE), an online space designed to store, catalogue, index, preserve and share our academic and research outputs and to make published work of SPMHS as widely available as possible.

Currently there are over 20 years of research publications by staff uploaded to SPIRE, totalling over 500 research outputs available locally and globally. SPIRE now includes the full text of journal articles, conference presentations, book chapters, technical reports, working papers, reviews and other scholarly contributions.

The launch of SPIRE marked a pivotal moment for our mental health service as it represents a commitment to fostering a culture of knowledge-sharing, collaboration and continuous improvement in the field of mental healthcare. SPIRE will serve as a centralised hub for research, containing a wealth of valuable resources aimed at enhancing the quality of care we provide and will continue to expand throughout 2025.

## Research Ethics Committee

The Research Ethics Committee continues to review new research applications and ensure regular reports are received from ongoing research projects. There was a reduction in the number of research projects submitted for approval during 2024, with just four applications received. The Research Ethics Committee met five times during the year.



(L-R): Paul Fearon, Medical Director, SPMHS; Gráinne, Donohue, Academic Institute Programme Manager, SPMHS; and Paul Gilligan, CEO, SPMHS at the launch of SPIRE

## Current studies

During 2024, members of SPMHS research teams were named as authors or co-authors on a total of 31 published papers in high-impact journals. SPMHS researchers also presented at 10 external conferences that took place in Ireland and abroad.

A total of four studies were approved by the SPMHS Research Ethics Committee in 2024.

These included:

- Transdiagnostic group CBT: an investigation of service-user experience in an inpatient mental health setting.
- Mental health nurse knowledge of medical care intervention - a training needs analysis.
- Service user and clinician perspectives of Emotion-Focused Group Therapy for young adults attending a mental health service.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of an adolescent virtual mental health ward in a not-for-profit, independent national Mental Health Service in the Republic of Ireland (ROI). A concurrent mixed method study.

## Training and professional development

SPMHS prides itself on its expertise in many aspects of mental health promotion, prevention, care and treatment. The SPMHS *Training Office Strategy* for 2023 to 2027 outlines the development of training activities based on the resources available within the organisation and in line with the organisational strategy to provide training to improve society's awareness and support of mental health at a citizen, employer, employee, health professional and government level.

In 2023, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Dalhousie University was signed, and this partnership progressed throughout 2024. A pilot Psychiatric Registrar Recruitment programme was designed as a key initiative of this partnership. The pilot sets out to explore the process, requirements and feasibility of recruiting Ghanaian doctors to complete a six-month training programme in Ireland as a psychiatric registrar and six months in Canada. The initiative aims to create and support a global training programme in mental health for Ghanaian doctors and to expand recruitment opportunities for Dalhousie University and SPMHS. Work continues in 2025 to seek the necessary approvals to progress this global mental health medical training initiative

## External training

SPMHS continues to work closely with the Department of Foreign Affairs to provide ongoing advice and support on issues that their staff encounter when dealing with Irish citizens and their families requiring consular assistance. Online training was delivered to the Madrid Consular Team in December 2024, with the session delivered remotely to in-person attendees in the Spanish Embassy.

In addition, SPMHS responded to a number of other requests for training including for Tourist SOS, an organisation which supports international visitors who experience a crime or other distressing incidents in Ireland, and Crosscare, a multi-faceted support organisation both requiring training and support in the area of dealing with the general public presenting with possible mental health symptoms.

A request was also made by Sports Ireland to SPMHS in the run up to the 2024 Olympic Games for additional mental health support for Irish athletes including access to inpatient care if required. An MOU with an associated referral pathway was designed to meet Sports Ireland's requirements for the provision of acute care if required.



## Training governance

The Training Governance Committee, established in 2023 and comprising representatives from all departments within SPMHS, ensures effective communication in relation to training governance across the organisation. The *Training Governance Policy* was developed and published during 2024 to provide oversight and organisational guidance for the management of training partnerships, programmes, agreements and contracts with external organisations.

In addition, the Committee tracks all new requests and current MOUs and formal education and training agreements are reviewed and updated, ensuring the content accurately reflects the ongoing work and collaborations between SPMHS and the pertinent educational organisation. This allows for timely reviews and renewals ensuring that the interests of SPMHS are protected throughout.

## Learning and development

As a teaching hospital aligned with Trinity College Dublin, SPMHS invests heavily in staff education and ongoing professional development.

The Human Resources Department designs, co-ordinates and ensures delivery of in-house staff and management training programmes.



### Objective 4 Training

The Department also supports ongoing continuous professional development (CPD), nurse training and external training programmes across all clinical and non-clinical disciplines. As a matter of course, staff are also encouraged and supported to engage in additional external CPD. The annual combined spend on non-mandatory and mandatory training in 2024 was more than €500,000.

Since 2012, SPMHS has had a formal Management Training Programme in place. A stated aim of the *Human Resources Management Strategy* is to ensure that SPMHS delivers relevant training programmes to support frontline management across all disciplines in the correct practice of managing their staff. The 2024 Management Training Programme was devised and delivered to assist with meeting this aim.

Management training in 2024 was again configured to address the most pressing requirements presenting to the organisation; be it in the form of developing case law, issues arising and obligations of SPMHS as an employer. The number of exclusively management-focused topics delivered in 2024 concentrated on the pre-employment and early employment phases, namely 'Interview Skills' and 'Managing the Probationary Period' training.

In addition, and to include management, there was an organisation-wide focus on the area of dignity in the workplace. Specific, tailored training was delivered to circa 500 staff who attended either in person or virtually at one of the multiple sessions held. Thereafter, five staff members volunteered to act as Contact Persons for the organisation as a whole and received focused training on this area.

Support and informal training continued to be provided to managers by the Human Resources Department. The Management Training Programme in SPMHS remains embedded in the organisation as an integral part of management training, staff management and the *Human Resources Management Strategy*. The organisation continues to build on the foundations already in place and layer on an agility of response.



# Service user engagement

**St Patrick's Mental Health Services (SPMHS) is undergoing a significant transformation; one that is fundamentally shaped by the insights, opinion, and perspectives of both past and present service users. Our organisational strategy for 2023–2027, *The Future in Mind*, reaffirms our ongoing commitment to meaningful partnership with those who use our services.**

In 2024, we strengthened this commitment by taking further steps to ensure that service users' voices are reflected in all aspects of SPMHS' operations and service delivery.

During the year, we sought to strengthen service user engagement structures by continuing to address the recommendations of the independent evaluation conducted in 2023. We also commenced implementation of an evaluation mechanism to help us assess the effectiveness of the service user and supporters' involvement structures.

Efforts to progress the proposal to introduce peer support working in SPMHS also continued during 2024, with plans being developed for a pilot programme.

Meaningful service user engagement is one of the core activities of SPMHS as we continually seek to enhance and advance every aspect of our services. Our highly engaged service users, both past and present, offer a unique perspective that richly enhances our development plans, and we continue to make efforts to amplify their voices.

## Service User and Supporters (SUAS) Council

The Service Users and Supporters Council, established in 2005, facilitates extensive service user participation, directly informing the development of SPMHS services. The main focus of SUAS is to listen to, and represent, the thoughts and opinions of our service users, as well as those who support them. SUAS ensures that the needs of service users and their supporters are central to every aspect of care and treatment. SUAS meets remotely on the first Wednesday of each month. Two new members were welcomed in November 2024, and SUAS ended the year with six members in total.





In 2024, SUAS successfully executed strategic initiatives to enhance visibility, improve service delivery and advocate for service user needs, fostering collaboration between stakeholders and driving meaningful organisational change. Throughout the year, SUAS continued to play a critical role in advocating for better communication, accessibility and engagement for service users, as well as contributing to broader awareness and service improvement efforts. This includes continuing to advocate for the introduction of peer support worker roles in SPMHS and collaborating with the Dean Clinic Programme Manager to address concerns regarding remote access for inpatients and appointment communications at Dean Clinics. SUAS members continued to review service user feedback, leading to improvements in dining services. They also contributed to updates in the nursing metrics survey to make questions more relevant to service user experiences.

In 2024, SUAS developed and launched the “SUAS Wall” in the Art Space at St Patrick’s University Hospital, with plans for a similar installation at St Patrick’s Hospital, Lucan. The goal of the wall is to highlight the work of SUAS and to encourage service users to engage with, and join, the Council or other service user engagement structures. SUAS members

worked with the Communications Department to create display layout and content for the SUAS Wall. The wall space includes a TV with two alternating videos (one highlighting the work of SUAS and another with positive quotes submitted by SUAS members and service users); posters outlining what SUAS is, how to join and the impact of SUAS; brochures for each of the service user engagement networks; and expression of interest forms for the networks.

SUAS members play a key role in SPMHS’ outreach and educational activities. During 2024, SUAS members participated in SPMHS-organised webinars, podcasts and explainer videos. SUAS members also supported the review and update of service user engagement materials and the design of the stigma survey for 2024.

Throughout 2024, two SUAS members continued to deliver a pre-discharge session as part of the Pillars of Wellness programme. These sessions are co-facilitated by the Information Centre Manager and provide the opportunity for former service users to share their experience of leaving hospital and to talk about SUAS. These sessions are run twice a month and are attended by an average of 20 current service users.



## Service User Advisory Network and Family, Carer and Supporter Advisory Network

Established in 2018, the Service User Advisory Network (SUAN) gives current and former service users the opportunity to provide input and play an active role in the strategic development of the organisation. The objective of SUAN is to build on the work being done by SUAS, providing opportunities for service users to engage in a time-limited, project-driven way. Members can take part in surveys or focus groups or join an advisory group. SUAN offers service users the opportunity to participate in ways that suit them, and to get involved in projects that are of interest to them.

The Family, Carer and Supporter (FCS) advisory group was established in 2022 to ensure that the family members and supporters of the people who use our services can also be involved in helping to shape and inform our services.

SUAN ended 2024 with 197 members and the FCS Advisory Network with 35 members. SUAN and FCS Advisory Network members received 24 newsletters, event notifications and reminders via email, in 2024, an 9% increase on 2023. The average newsletter open rate is 67.6%.

In 2024, members of SUAN, and the FCS Advisory Network were invited to participate in consultative forums, advisory groups and collaborative working groups.

These initiatives reflect SPMHS' commitment to ensuring that service users' voices are heard and that their feedback directly informs decision-making processes, future developments and operational improvements.

Members from both SUAN and the FCS Advisory Network attended two consultative forums during 2024 and a number of SUAN and FCS network members also joined the Remote Care User Advisory Forum to guide the development of the *Digital Transformation Strategy*.

SUAN and FCS network members also contributed to a number of national policy contributions such as the new National Disability Strategy and participating in the Joint Committee on Disability Matters to review Ireland's adherence to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). SUAN and FCS network members also contributed to public consultations on the National LGBT+ Inclusive Strategy, the National Suicide Prevention Strategy Review and the development of an Inclusion Health Framework. Members were also invited to join the Mental Health Commission Stakeholder Forum to provide feedback on mental health service regulation.

Media interview skills training was also offered to members during 2024. Through these diverse activities, members actively contributed to improving mental health services, influencing policies and shaping the broader conversation around mental health and inclusion.





## Remote Care User Advisory Forum

The Remote Care User Advisory Forum met monthly from May to November to provide input on communications about digital health and to help increase use of Your Portal among service users. This collaborative project group has 16 service user representatives, along with representatives from the Digital Health and Digital Communications teams and the Psychology Department.

A Consultative Forum was held at the beginning of May on the theme of “Your Portal: and its role in your service user experience”. This forum provided the opportunity to update service users and staff about SPMHS’ Digital Transformation Strategy; how Your Portal has advanced to date; and the plans for the future. It also provided the opportunity for service users to tell us about their experiences of Your Portal and their views on the plans for the next phase. The Dean Clinic Programme Manager also spoke about the benefits of Your Portal to the Dean Clinic staff and to their service users. Following the Consultative Forum, new members joined the Forum, and their attendance and contribution were welcomed at the first meeting in May 2024 and monthly thereafter.

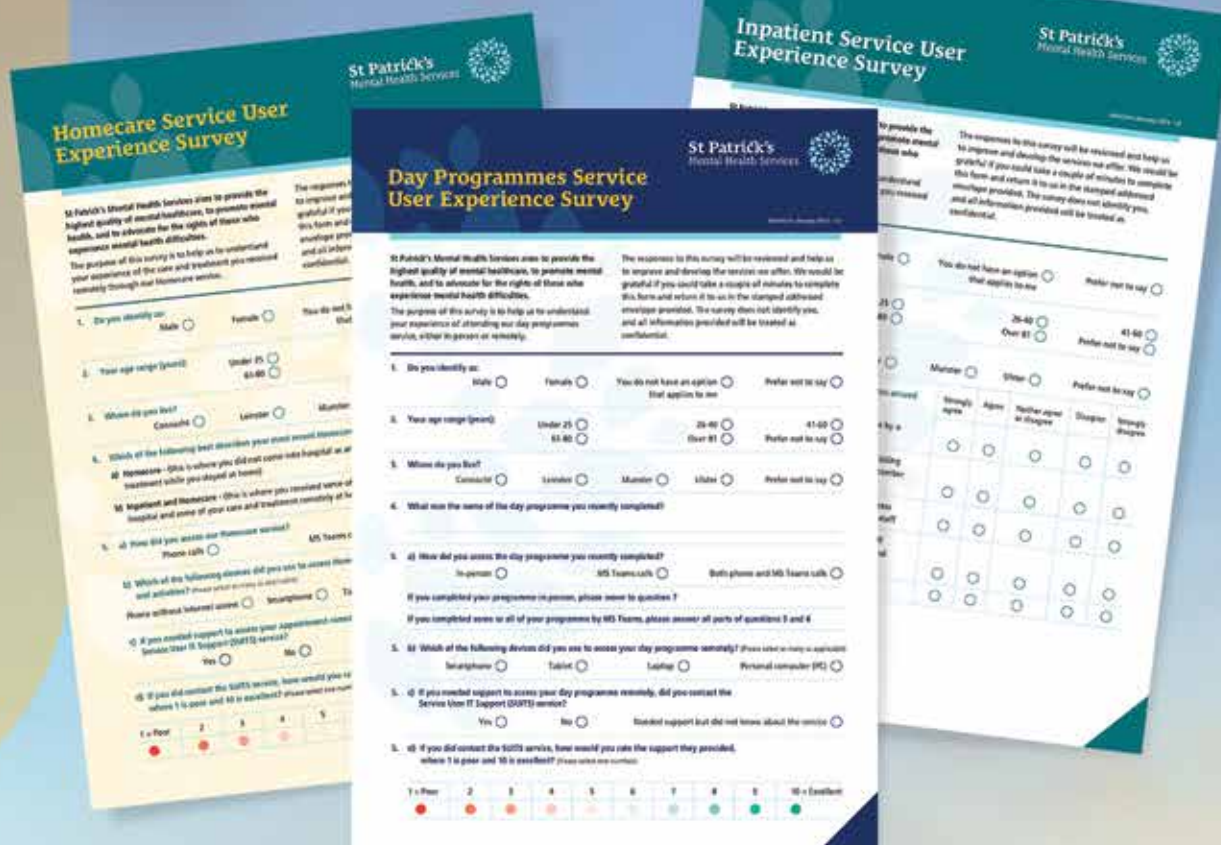
## Academic Institute Steering Group

The Academic Institute steering group met twice in 2024. This is a collaborative group with four SUAN members, one FCS Advisory Network member as well as the CEO, Medical Director, Academic Institute Programme Manager and the Director of Communications and Advocacy.

## Peer Support Worker Working Group

The Peer Support Worker Working Group met monthly between September 2023 until January 2024. This is a collaborative group, with members representing SUAS, SUAN and the FCS Advisory Network, as well as staff from SPMHS multidisciplinary teams and others with expertise in this area.

The purpose of this working group is to drive forward and develop the proposal made by SUAS to introduce peer support workers in SPMHS. The work of this group culminated in the production of a document of supplementary information that was submitted to the Clinical Governance Committee in February 2024 in response to their queries on the proposal. Since then, efforts have been focused internally on the most appropriate structure and approach to advance a pilot programme of peer support working.



## Service User Experience Surveys

Our Service User Experience Surveys are a key tool for the ongoing assessment and evaluation of our services across our suite of offerings. There are four surveys for the adult service, which are: inpatient, Homecare, day programmes and Dean Clinics. There are also five surveys for adolescent services, and these are: Willow Grove for young people, for parents, Willow Grove Homecare for young people, for parents and the Dean Clinic adolescent clinic survey. All survey templates were reviewed and updated in late 2024, and the revised versions were introduced in January 2025.

The number of survey responses received was 745 for the Dean Clinic, representing a 114% increase on 2023, 294 for inpatient (including Homecare), a 12% percentage increase on 2023, and 96 for day programmes, a 34% decrease on 2023. Since March 2024, key points from the feedback provided via the service user experience surveys have been shared with the Senior Management Team via a monthly dashboard report in order to provide more real-time feedback and to help to identify issues and patterns as they arise in the feedback.

## Consultative Forums

Two consultative forums were held in 2024 with 52 service users and family members, carers and supporters registering to attend these Consultative Forums - 20 attended the events. One covered the topic of digital health, while the other pertained to access and disability. Both Consultative Forums were attended by representatives of the Board and the Senior Management Team.

As part of the continual process of monitoring service user engagement forums, attendees were invited to provide feedback about their experience of attending the Consultative Forums. Twelve completed surveys were received, and the feedback was very positive. In the surveys, 100% of respondents said they agreed or strongly agreed that they are confident that their input through the Consultative Forum will be considered by SPMHS, while 91% of respondents said they agreed or strongly agreed that the input provided through the forum will make a difference to the work of the organisation.



# Income & expenditure account and other comprehensive income

for the year ended 31 December 2024

Extract from Financial Statements

	2024 €'000	2023 €'000
<b>Income - continuing operations</b>		
Maintenance and treatment fees	93,812	90,106
Other income	163	194
	<b>93,975</b>	<b>90,300</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Salaries and wages	(68,071)	(64,515)
Establishment and administration expenses	(16,241)	(17,097)
Other operating costs	(5,617)	(5,840)
Depreciation	(3,463)	(3,136)
	<b>(93,392)</b>	<b>(90,588)</b>
<b>Operating surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>583</b>	<b>(288)</b>
Interest payable and similar charges	(103)	(133)
Gain on Disposal of Fixed Assets	-	1,133
<b>Surplus for the year</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>712</b>

The hospital had no recognised gains and losses in the financial year or previous financial year other than those dealt with in the above profit and loss account, and as such have not prepared a separate statement of other comprehensive income.



# Balance sheet

as at 31 December 2024

	2024 €'000	2023 €'000
<b>Fixed assets</b>		
Tangible fixed assets	21,118	23,262
Financial assets	4	4
	<u>21,122</u>	<u>23,266</u>
<b>Current assets</b>		
Stocks	96	107
Debtors	23,297	17,176
Cash at bank and on hand	21,083	22,442
	<u>44,476</u>	<u>39,725</u>
<b>Creditors</b>		
Amounts falling due within one year	(27,548)	(24,146)
<b>Net current assets</b>	<u>16,928</u>	<u>15,579</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	<b>38,050</b>	<b>38,845</b>
<b>Creditors</b>		
Amounts falling due after more than one year	(1,792)	(3,067)
<b>Net assets</b>	<u>36,258</u>	<u>35,778</u>
<b>Capital and special funds</b>		
Capital account	<u>36,258</u>	<u>35,778</u>



# Statement of changes in equity

for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Capital Account €'000	Total €'000
<b>Balance at 1 January 2023</b>	<b>35,066</b>	<b>35,066</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>		
Surplus for the year	712	712
Total comprehensive expense for the year	712	712
<b>Balance at 31 December 2023</b>	<b>35,778</b>	<b>35,778</b>

	Capital Account €'000	Total €'000
<b>Balance at 1 January 2024</b>	<b>35,778</b>	<b>35,778</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>		
Surplus for the year	480	480
Total comprehensive expense for the year	480	480
<b>Balance at 31 December 2024</b>	<b>36,258</b>	<b>36,258</b>

# Cash flow statement

for the year ended 31 December 2024

	2024 €'000	2023 €'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>		
Surplus for the year	480	712
<i>Adjustments for:</i>		
Depreciation	3,463	3,136
Interest payable and similar charges	103	133
Write off fixed assets	-	880
Gain on Disposal of Fixed Assets	-	(1,133)
	<u>4,046</u>	<u>3,728</u>
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other debtors	(6,121)	(2,857)
Decrease/(Increase) in stocks	11	(25)
Increase in trade and other creditors	<u>3,030</u>	<u>5,812</u>
	<u>(3,080)</u>	<u>2,930</u>
<b>Net cash from operating activities</b>	<u>966</u>	<u>6,658</u>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Acquisition of tangible fixed assets	(1,319)	(2,756)
Proceeds from Sale of Assets	-	1,747
<b>Net cash from investing activities</b>	<u>(1,319)</u>	<u>(1,009)</u>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>		
Loan repayments	(903)	(873)
Interest paid	(103)	(133)
<b>Net cash from financing activities</b>	<u>(1,006)</u>	<u>(1,006)</u>
Net (Decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents	(1,359)	4,643
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	<u>22,442</u>	<u>17,799</u>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of year</b>	<u>21,083</u>	<u>22,442</u>





# Appendix A - Board and committee attendances

## Present at Board meetings during 2024

GOVERNORS	1 Feb	7 Mar	2 Apr	2 May	6 Jun	4 Jul	4 Sep	26 Sep	6 Nov	4 Dec
Mr Danny Kitchen, Chairman, Board of Directors)	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Ms Caroline Gill	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Prof Joyce O'Connor	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Ms Bernadette Godley	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO
Mr Michael Moriarty	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Mr Tom Godfrey	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Prof Damian Mohan	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Mr Kevin Nowlan	N/A	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO

EX-OFFICIO GOVERNORS	1 Feb	7 Mar	2 Apr	2 May	6 Jun	4 Jul	4 Sep	26 Sep	6 Nov	4 Dec
The Most Reverend Dr Michael Jackson	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
The Very Reverend William Wright Morton	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
The Very Reverend Dermot Dunne	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO



SPMHS Executive Management Team

#### Present at Board meetings during 2024

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS	1 Feb	7 Mar	2 Apr	2 May	6 Jun	4 Jul	4 Sep	26 Sep	6 Nov	4 Dec
Mr Paul Gilligan (Chief Executive Officer)	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Prof Paul Fearon (Medical Director)	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES
Mr Brendan Power (Director of Human Resources/Company Secretary)	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO
Ms Mary Farrelly (Director of Finance)	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

#### EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM 2024

Mr Paul Gilligan	Chief Executive Officer
Prof Paul Fearon	Medical Director
Ms Mary Farrelly	Director of Finance
Mr Tom Maher	Director of Services
Mr Brendan Power	Director of Human Resources, Company Secretary
Mr John Creedon	Director of Nursing
Ms Orla Gogarty	Director of Digital Health, Transformation and Partnerships
Ms Tamara Nolan	Director of Communications and Advocacy



# Appendix B - Peer-reviewed research

## Publications

### Association between a large change between the minimum and maximum monthly values of solar insolation and a history of suicide attempts in bipolar I disorder.

Ritter, P., Glenn, T., Achtyes, E. D., Alda, M., Agaoglu, E., Altınbaş, K., Andreassen, O. A., Angelopoulos, E., Arda, R., Aydin, M., Ayhan, Y., Baethge, C., Bauer, R., Baune, B. T., Balaban, C., Becerra-Palars, C., Behere, A. P., Behere, P. B., Belete, H., Belete, T., ... Bauer, M. (2024). *International journal of bipolar disorders*, 12(1), 43. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40345-024-00364-5>.

### Award winning abstracts presented at the 14th Annual International College of Mental Health Pharmacy (CMHP) Conference Glasgow, UK, on 11th and 12th October 2024.

Hewitt, K. Ni Dhubhlaing, C. (2014) *Journal of Psychopharmacology*, 38 (2\_suppl):3-8. doi:10.1177/02698811241300038

### Research needs of higher specialist trainees in psychiatry in Ireland: mixed methods study.

Counihan, E., Carey, C., Feeney, A., Lally, K., O'Connor, C., & Doherty, A. M. (2024). *BJPsych bulletin*, 1–6. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1192/bjb.2024.91>.

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Grady, S., Twomey C., Gaynor, K. (2024). Schizophrenia Research, 264, 435-447. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.schres.2024.01.008>.



## Conference presentations

**A systematic review and meta-analysis of the proportion of people with a first episode psychosis admitted to hospital at the time of presentation with subgroup analysis according to sex, diagnosis, DUP and access to early intervention services.**

Gannon, L (2024).

College of Psychiatrists of Ireland, Winter Conference, Nov 24.

**Delivering inpatient psychiatric care virtually: outcomes of virtual versus physical admissions to an independent psychiatric hospital.**

McCaffrey C. (2024).

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**The Impact of Anorexia Nervosa on Biological Ageing.**

Doody, E, McLoughlin, DM, O'Toole, C, Ryan, K. (2024).

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**Anticholinergic burden in people with intellectual disability living in a nursing home.**

Pillay, N., Murray, N., Brar, G, Mulryan, N., Ambikapathy, A, Kelly, F., Lane, J. (2024).

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**Road to Recovery: Community Outing Group in Inpatient CAMHS.**

Gallagher A, Doyle, R (2024).

Association of Occupational Therapists of Ireland, Mental Health Advisory Group Study Day, Nov 24.

**What does the psychedelic renaissance mean for psychotherapists?**

Scanlon, S, Donohue, G. (2024).

IDPAT Psychedelic Research conference, TCD, Oct 24.

**Virtual Reality for Exposure Therapy.**

Kirwan, S, Smith, F., Whyte, A., Douglas, L (2024).

8th Global Virtual Conference on Nursing Education, Feb 24.

**The Delivery of a Virtual Reality Pilot for Exposure Therapy in a mental health setting.**

Kirwan, S, Smith, F., Whyte, A., Douglas, L (2024).

THE Conf, TCD, March 24.

**Developing an Innovative Model for Virtual Reality Exposure Therapy for Social Anxiety Disorder in an Irish Mental health Setting.**

Douglas, L. (2024).

A Scoping Review, Horatio Conference, Malmo, 2024.

**Lessons from a Crisis: A Thematic Analysis on Occupational Stress in Staff in an Acute Paediatric Teaching Hospital in Ireland.**

Ward, S., Donohue G., Murray J., McNicholas F. (2024).

College of Psychiatrists Spring conference, 18th & 19th April.



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