



UCD School of Medicine
Scoil an Leighis UCD



Tomorrow's Medicine



UCD School of Medicine
Strategic Plan 2021 - 2025



MEDICAL REPORT

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RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted our global connectedness and interdependency like never before in our lifetime. It has brought into sharp focus the importance of public health, the consequence of individual action and the inherent health inequalities in our society.

But it has also showcased the indomitable human spirit, the incredible power of focused research and the inspiring collaborative potential of modern medicine.

Our recent focus on infectious diseases must not, however, mask the health burden of non-communicable diseases such as cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes and respiratory diseases which account for over 80% of all premature deaths globally. Our high fertility rates, ageing population demographics and improving life expectancy, each drive increasing health and social care costs and focus on chronic diseases. Individual action is needed to reduce smoking, alcohol consumption and obesity levels whilst impactful Government policies required to address structural social determinants of health and wellbeing. The national challenge of providing equitable, effective and evidence-based health and social care meet the global challenges of climate change, migration and economic recession.

With an increased understanding of disease aetiology and pathogenesis, biomedical science has heralded a new era of genetic or molecular intervention and the promise of more targeted, personalised medicine. These advances have brought with them not inconsiderable data management and clinical interpretation challenges as well as complex ethical considerations.

The rapidly changing evidence base means that we must train healthcare professionals with critical-thinking, evaluation and interpretation skills. Doctors, radiographers and paramedics increasingly work as part of multi-professional, multi-disciplinary teams centred on the needs of their patients.

The respectful involvement of patients in research, in the education of healthcare professionals and in clinical decision-making is now an undeniable imperative. It is essential that public confidence is maintained in the integrity of all healthcare professions and that we work collaboratively to deliver the best possible health outcomes for patients.

We will equip our students and graduates with the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies to meet the challenges of healthcare today. Through our collective efforts, we will rise together to deliver tomorrow's medicine and help achieve our University's strategic priorities.



OUR STRATEGY

OUR VISION

Health and well-being in Ireland and around the world.

OUR MISSION

To be a community of healthcare professionals and scientists that improves health outcomes through excellence in education, research, and patient care.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We recognise the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion among our students and our staff to drive optimum School performance through the active engagement of all. We will lead and work with University initiatives that support, promote and demonstrate a culture of inclusivity and diversity. We welcome a difference of opinion, encourage respectful interactions between colleagues and seek diverse access to our programmes including from under-represented groups.

OUR VALUES

Reflecting the University's values, the School prioritises excellence, integrity, collegiality, engagement and diversity. In addition, the School commits itself to public service, clinical leadership and collaboration with its healthcare partners.

Our philosophy is:

- Grounded on understanding and critical evaluation of the evidence base that underpins the 'science of medicine'.
- Demonstrated by the professional behaviours of our staff and students in the 'art of clinical practice'.
- Exemplified by honest, competent and reflective practise that puts the needs of the patient first.
- Maintained through a commitment to the core principles of informed consent, evidence-based decision-making and scientific integrity.

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1

To deliver ambitious educational programmes that both inspire and prepare our graduate for excellence in practice and for leadership roles in tomorrow's healthcare.

2

To conduct high quality translational and clinical research in areas of national significance and global importance.

3

To innovate in teaching and assessment, undertaking comprehensive education research to improve our programmes and inform national policy.

4

To attract and retain staff who are driven by the pursuit of excellence in academic and clinical practice and provide them with career progression opportunities.

5

To attract a diverse cohort of students and to offer elective opportunities around the world so that our graduates emerge competitive for careers in healthcare leadership roles and understand global perspectives.

6

To create graduates with the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for professional practice.

7

To build an enduring sense of community among our students, staff and alumni.

8

To support our education and research endeavours on campus by strengthening School infrastructure across our clinical training networks.

9

To maintain a strong effective organisation with resource allocation that is consistent with our School's strategic priorities.

10

To question continuously our assumptions and collect appropriate key performance data that supports informed decision-making and organisational development.



TEACHING & LEARNING INNOVATION

To deliver ambitious and progressive educational programmes which both inspire and prepare our graduate for excellence in practice and for leadership roles in tomorrow's healthcare systems across the globe.

Our educational programmes are fundamentally about people. High calibre students, supported by expert staff, to develop the knowledge, skills and professional attitudes necessary to become caring, competent and compassionate clinicians and scientists. Our graduates will be leaders within a complex, continuously changing and challenging healthcare system. They will contribute to the development of new medicines, technologies and care pathways that demonstratively improve patient health and well-being.

OUR EDUCATIONAL STRENGTHS

- Dynamic, progressive programmes that are responsive to the envisioned needs of tomorrow's healthcare leaders.
- Internationally recognised degrees that prepare graduates for global practice and inspire them to leadership.
- Research-active faculty of ambitious educators who define educational best practice.
- An excellent clinical learning environment and an experienced and expert faculty of clinical educators engaged in clinical training across the continuum of medical education in a leading academic health system
- A global network of influential UCD School of Medicine alumni leaders, harnessed to support students and graduates in an international community of scholars.

OUR ACADEMIC OBJECTIVE

Our educational programmes prepare skilled professionals to address ever-changing healthcare needs both in Ireland and around the globe.

In our Medicine and Radiography programmes, we will prioritise meaningful and appropriate early patient contact such that our students acquire the necessary professional skills and are fired with an enthusiasm that sustains them throughout their careers. We will encourage our students to identify their clinical specialty of choice and will provide them with structured electives that best prepare them for their postgraduate practice.

Our programmes will introduce concepts, principles and methods which allow our students to become critical thinkers who identify, evaluate and embrace new knowledge continuously throughout their clinical practice.

Our progressive, dynamic and internationally relevant programmes will prepare our students for practice and equip them with the skills necessary to grow throughout their careers. Our curriculum enhancement themes will be led by expert practitioners who understand patient priorities and modern integrated healthcare delivery, who are skilled in the art of clinical education, and who contribute to medical education scholarship.



EMPOWERING ACADEMIC STAFF

Our academic staff will be inspiring and empowered subject experts who trace their educational content to professional graduate attributes and map these skills to clinical practice. Their role will be about explaining, integrating and evaluating. They will model good professional behaviour, be accessible mentors and will prioritise engaged student learning.

We encourage a distributed educational authority such that our academic staff can act as Heads of Subject, Stage and Site Coordinators, Programme and Educational Theme Leads. We will support ongoing faculty development of both our academic and our clinical staff and offer formal credentialing in teaching and learning skills. We will encourage our faculty to engage within the School, across the University and with other Medical Schools and healthcare organisations to diffuse best practice and demonstrate our teaching excellence.

Our academic staff will be both teacher and researcher with equal significance given to both academic activities. Some will be involved in fundamental biomedical research; some in translational clinical research; some in transformative educational research.

They will drive innovation and continuous programme enhancement, consistent with international educational best practice. They will be expected to contribute not only to programme delivery but also to the process of academic renewal.

Fundamental teaching and assessment skills will be embedded in academic staff induction and our teaching faculty will demonstrate these credentials through postgraduate qualifications. The School will recognise and reward teaching excellence and will encourage the University to give similar priority in its academic promotions pathways.

DELIVERING ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

We will identify a broad constituency of educational leaders under the direction and coordination of the Associate Dean for Programmes & Educational Innovation. This cadre will include engaged module and stage coordinators, programme leads and educational theme leads who are united by a common understanding of our curricula.

We will demonstrate expertise in all aspect of teaching and assessment of professional healthcare staff and create a suite of quality programmes in clinical education and credentialing.

We will develop ambitious, creative and innovative educator roles across all programmes that harness the expertise and enthusiasm of clinicians, scientists and patient advocates. We will identify educational project champions to build the evidence base that demonstrates programme performance and programme theme leads who integrate learning across modules, stages and indeed programmes.

Our academic staff will undertake focused medical and clinical education research that both informs and influences government policy in healthcare. Our educators will actively influence national policy, set the agenda for progressive modern clinical education and contribute internationally to healthcare education scholarship.



PROVIDING PROFESSIONAL SUPPORTS

→ **Medical Education Team**

The School will nurture a medical education team comprising academic leaders, technology specialists and programme managers who support our programme enhancement initiatives.

This cohort of staff is essential to demonstrate current programme performance, programme enhancement and student progression both internally and to external accreditation groups. They drive a substantial component of ongoing medical education research and triangulate between programme design, delivery and impact.

→ **Patient Educators & Patient Advocates**

Our innovative use of Patient Educators and Patient Advocates ensures that our students and staff put empathy and compassion at the centre of clinical practice. We will seek opportunities to involve Patient Educators across all our programmes and to find ways in which the patient experience informs the education and training of future healthcare professionals.

→ **Clinical Training Network**

Our expansive clinical training network is the foundation on which all our vocational programmes are built. They are key to the student learning experience, to programme quality and are essential to delivering clinical training.

We will support our clinical colleagues as an expert community of Portfolio Educators comprising clinical tutors, doctors and radiographers in training, and senior healthcare professionals.

We will continuously monitor and evaluate our clinical training sites to ensure the best possible student experience and benchmark them against international best practice. Our engagement with Clinical Site Leads will ensure that our clinical educators fully understand our programme objectives and have an opportunity to inform curriculum enhancement.



EFFECTIVE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES

The effectiveness of our educational structures relies on the efficient execution of current programmes and their simultaneous evaluation and continuous enhancement.

Our programme delivery will be managed through an engaged academic faculty comprising Heads of Subject, Module and Stage Coordinators supported by a professional academic-support staff.

Our programme enhancement function will include experts in medical and clinical education, teaching practice and assessment strategies with subject area specialists drawn from across our faculty.

Our extensive clinical faculty will have opportunities to shape our curricular developments and participate in education, education research and clinical training in a manner that makes optimal use of their expertise.

COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The School will be internationally recognised for its expertise in clinical education and our staff will build mutually beneficial collaborations with international centres of excellence.

We will encourage our staff and students to engage constructively across the University and with other Medical Schools to advance our understanding of the education of healthcare professionals.

We will support inter-professional education and facilitate the education of our students as members of a multi-disciplinary team, centred on the patient needs.



MEASURING AND DEMONSTRATING IMPACT

Our programme impact will be assessed by how well we prepare our student:

- As a Scholar
- As a Healthcare Professional
- As a Practitioner

There is no single career destination for our graduates. They will not be 'identikit' graduates with a uniform skill set. They will be grounded in science but equally important, they will be prepared for their roles as carers in different professional capacities within an increasingly integrated and interdependent healthcare system.

We will ensure that our students are prepared for practice as graduate doctors, radiographers and scientists but also that they have opportunities to explore areas of potential career interest with inspiring subject experts.



RESEARCH, INNOVATION & INQUIRY

OUR ACADEMIC OBJECTIVES

- 1 To be an internationally recognised centre of research excellence and a destination of choice for the best research students.
- 2 To conduct impactful biomedical, translational and clinical research in areas of national significance and global importance.

Our research strategy centres on our commitment to supporting research excellence by individual investigators, groups of researchers aligned around common themes and through strategic collaboration with external research centres.

Rather than prescribe specific priority areas, we will encourage our investigators to pursue high quality, peer-reviewed research that is focused on diseases of national significance and global importance, fully exploiting expertise within our School.

EMPOWERING ACADEMIC STAFF

Under the direction of our Associate Dean for Research, Innovation and Impact, we will expect our academic staff to be research-active and supportive of a culture of inquiry and discovery among both our faculty and our students.

We will exhort all academic staff to be curious and questioning in their scholarship, adding to the body of medical knowledge as they seek evidence to support clinical practice.

Faculty will be expected to demonstrate the impact of their teaching on student learning and ensure that it is informed by research.

We will adopt a balanced recruitment strategy to strengthen the School through a combination of new staff hires and the progression of our existing faculty.

Our academic staff will inspire the next generation of researchers by their example, by participating in our teaching programmes and by providing early opportunities for our students to participate in research.

Our academic staff will publish their research findings in relevant peer-reviewed journals and we will support their output with effective communications. They will create the next generation of researchers by supervising to completion doctoral students and by demonstrating excellence in scholarship and research mentorship.



RESEARCH LEADERSHIP

- » We will build a cohort of translational research scientists who will provide leadership in medical research and innovation in Ireland.
- » We will encourage distributed research leadership across the School, empowering individual investigators to build teams that are curious, collaborative and connected.
- » We will grow the next generation of research leaders to be distinctive by their pursuit of excellence, integrity and collaborative mind-set.
- » This symphony of research leaders will be conducted by our *Associate Dean for Research, Innovation & Impact* who will coordinate individual efforts to maximise our overall effectiveness and impact. The Associate Dean will lead strategic research initiatives across the School and its research collaborators.
- » The School *Research, Innovation & Impact Group (RIIG)* will create an environment that supports impactful research activity and leads strategic initiatives that broaden and deepen our research portfolio, prioritising quality and healthcare impact.
- » Our doctoral students will be encouraged to create a mutually supportive student-led association such that individual students can benefit from expertise across the School and such that they have a leadership voice that influences School development.

PROVIDING PROFESSIONAL SUPPORTS

- » We will deploy efficient and effective professional staff to support our academic community and to ensure that this resource is optimally utilised. This resource will be an integral part of our research teams and will be characterised by their 'can-do' attitude.
- » Through our *Associate Dean for Research, Innovation & Impact*, the School will provide targeted, professional support to individual investigators and research groups consistent with our strategic research priorities.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES

- » Our research centres will each have a well-articulated objective, a clearly defined membership and an effective connection within the School's organisational structures.
- » We will align investigator groups around common themes to articulate our collective research portfolio.
- » Individual investigators will have strong research profiles that demonstrate their research interests, key achievements and collaborative potential.
- » Each individual and research unit will have a strong sense of connection within the School with effective communication channels and appropriate representation in School-wide committees.
- » We will establish a community of researchers and a School-wide culture of research by showcasing our research activities and bringing groups of investigators together frequently.
- » Our School will be recognised as an organisation that supports quality research, attracts the brightest research students and provides a supportive research career pathway.



COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- » Individual investigators and research clusters will be open to collaboration with external research groups.
- » They will build mutually beneficial research coalitions with like-minded investigators, other UCD faculty, our clinical partners and international research groups.
- » The public and patients representatives groups will be actively involved in all aspects of our research from conception through execution to the dissemination of outputs.
- » Central to our translational research capability is having strong, supportive links with doctors and clinical investigators at our affiliated clinical sites. With over half of our research led by clinical investigators, the School will strive to ensure that they are fully supported to inform, shape and deliver our research agenda.

MEASURING IMPACT

- » We will report key performance metrics that will demonstrate both the quality and the impact of our research.
- » We will undertake a rigorous and objective external Research Evaluation Exercise for the School and our principal research groups, benchmarking the School's research profile against leading international comparators.



OUR PEOPLE

The reputation of our School is built on the individual strengths and achievements of our students, our alumni and our staff who demonstrate their professional and clinical skills in practice.

OUR STUDENTS

We are privileged to attract a diverse cohort of high calibre students to each of our programmes. The School is committed to maintaining broad access to our programmes and to supporting recruitment from under-represented groups.

- » We will maintain diversified international recruitment such that we provide a distinctive Irish education that is outward-looking and that prepares our students for practice around the globe.
- » We encourage our students to be engaged learners who take charge of their degree journey, acquiring the necessary skills and firing an enthusiasm for their careers ahead.
- » We will challenge our students to excel not just academically but to embrace a holistic educational experience that equips them for a profession that they will be passionate about.
- » We will support the re-integration of our international students to their native healthcare systems by making them competitive for top internships and/or residency matching programmes.
- » We will expand our global partnerships to allow students to undertake clinical and research electives at international locations including North America, the Middle East, Africa and the ASEAN region. Through these international partnerships, our students will learn how different global health systems work and bring this knowledge with them to their health system.
- » We aim to be internationally recognised as a leading European Medical School with a strong portfolio of professionally relevant undergraduate and postgraduate programmes that allow high calibre students reach their full potential as medical practitioners, healthcare professionals and research leaders.
- » We welcome feedback from our students on their educational experience and commit to using this insight to inform our programme development priorities. We see them as academic partners.



OUR ALUMNI

Although we are extremely proud of our alumni, the School does not have a comprehensive, regular and ongoing engagement with them.

- » Working with UCD Alumni Relations, the School will seek to build a more meaningful, multi-point connection with all our alumni.
- » We will demonstrate our student and school achievements to foster alumni pride in their alma mater and we will celebrate the success of our alumni to inspire the next generation of scientists and clinicians.
- » We will conduct a detailed periodic census of graduate career destinations to inform our curriculum enhancement and to identify academic collaboration and student placement opportunities around the world.



OUR STAFF

The School is committed to attracting and retaining expert academic, research and academic support staff and providing them with the necessary resources and opportunities to excel at their individual roles.

We expect our academic staff to contribute strongly to both teaching and research domains and, arising from their professional responsibilities, to be healthcare leaders.

- » We are committed to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion. We welcome a plurality of opinion, a variety of approaches and respectful, robust interrogation of the evidence base.
- » We encourage the continuous personal growth of all staff and the demonstration of their expertise through peer-reviewed publications and external presentations. Our staff will be inspiring leaders who demonstrate the highest ethical standards, lead by example and help shape national policy.
- » We will support our research staff as they build their investigative skills, recognising them as a key constituency within the School and preparing them for careers in academia and beyond.
- » The School will adopt a balanced approach to recruitment, consistent with the University strategy of providing the opportunity for progression of junior faculty.
- » We will strengthen core academic disciplines to maintain the quality of our academic programmes and deliver impactful multi-disciplinary research.
- » We will forge a connection with our extensive clinical adjunct faculty, seeking opportunities to use their skills and expertise to inspire our students.
- » We encourage academic collaborations across the School, the College, the University and beyond.

The image shows the exterior of a building with a blue brick wall. At the top, there is a white horizontal band with the text 'Ionad na nEolaíochtaí Sláinte UCD Health Sciences Centre' in raised, metallic letters. Below this, the blue brick wall features two windows. The window on the right is blurred, showing a person walking past. The foreground consists of a paved sidewalk with a tactile paving strip. The overall lighting is bright, suggesting daytime.

Ionad na nEolaíochtaí Sláinte UCD
UCD Health Sciences Centre

ALIGNMENT WITH UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Our strategy aligns with the University Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024 'Rising to the Future' which was published in December 2019.

This plan re-commits us to being a research-focused globally engaged university that confidently prepares our students for leadership roles in Ireland and around the world. It commits our staff to leadership roles and the University to the creation of a sustainable, engaged community.



RISING TO THE FUTURE

UCD Strategy 2020-2024





Our School enthusiastically looks to the future
with confidence and optimism.

Through the achievements of our students and graduates
and the excellence of our staff in research and education,
we expect to contribute strongly to the both School and
University rising to the future and Tomorrow's Medicine.



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www.ucd.ie/medicine