

CRF's Annual Scientific Meeting

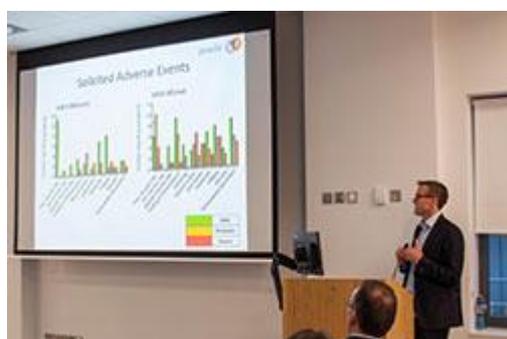
Over 80 hospital and university staff and students attended the CRF's Annual Scientific Meeting held on 13th December 2017.

The meeting showcased the health science research being supported by the CRF. Research studies are being undertaken by a wide range of health professionals in the areas of hepatitis, oncology, infectious diseases, audiology and inherited retinal diseases.



The meeting featured two keynote speeches in the field of oncology. **Professor David Adams from the University of Birmingham** delivered an inspiring talk on the research being undertaken in Birmingham to understand the interplay between liver immunology and the development of hepatocellular carcinoma. This information is now being exploited to develop dendritic cell vaccination approaches targeting this condition.

This was followed by a further keynote presentation from **Professor John O'Leary** who showed stunning images of cancer tumour cells circulating in the bloodstream being cloaked and hidden from the immune system by platelets. This mechanism, known as platelet cloaking suggests that the spread of cancer by circulating tumour cells could be potentially moderated or avoided by anti-platelet medications.



The first session of the day was moderated by **Professor Suzanne Norris** and featured a range of research involving patients with hepatitis-C.

Dr Ciaran Bannan presented the work of a phase 1 trial of a Hepatitis C vaccine funded by an EU FP7 Grant. The vaccine was shown to safely confer immunity after two vaccinations.

Dr Damien Ferguson presented preliminary findings from the HRB funded CANDI study, which is looking at the natural history of the development of cognitive impairment in people with Hepatitis C.

Jamie Sugrue from the TCD School of Biochemistry and Immunology spoke about important work being done to investigate why a minority of the women who were exposed to blood products containing the Hepatitis C virus did show any evidence of being infected by



the virus **Philip O’Gorman** then presented on a study examining whether a 12 week aerobic exercise programme for people with Hepatitis C has a positive impact upon cognition.

In the afternoon, **Professor Jacintha O’Sullivan** of the TCD Department of Surgery that included a mix of studies.



Thavakumar Subranium, a St. James’s Hospital ENT Registrar spoke about an innovative study exploring whether some forms of Tinnitus (ringing in the ears) can be treated with neuromodulation. Over two hundred patients are involved in this study taking place in the CRF. **Dr. Conor Murphy** spoke to the meeting about a programme of research being undertaken with UCD to look at the potential role of gut hormones in the stimulation and suppression of

appetite. **Dr Niamh Lynham-Lennon** presented her research into how the complement system might play a role in chemoradiation resistant oesophageal adenocarcinoma. **Grainne Sheill** from the Discipline of Physiotherapy presented the findings of an international study supported by the CRF looking into how lifestyle factors (diet and exercise) affect the quality of life in men with metastatic prostate cancer.

The last presentation in this session was by **Dr. Mary O’Sullivan** who told us about the scientific work being done with lung cell samples from cigarette samples collected by the CRF research nurses. Using these cells it has been demonstrated that cigarette smokers are more vulnerable to TB infection.

The last session was chaired by **Professor John Gormley** of the School of Physiotherapy. In this session **Matthew Carrigan** from the Smurfit Institute of Genetics told us about work being done to genotype and phenotype Irish patients with inherited retinopathies. This valuable work is required to help identify those patients with gene mutations that might be amenable to new gene therapies for inherited retinal diseases.

Lauren Boland from the Discipline of Occupational Health spoke to the meeting about a new self-management programme supporting cancer survivors. Two researchers from the School of Physiotherapy. **Ann Monaghan** presented research on the respiratory fitness of individuals living with Hepatitis C and **Linda O’Neill** presented her research on the RESTORE randomized control trial to see if rehabilitation aimed at improving respiratory fitness improves oesophago-gastric cancer survivorship.

