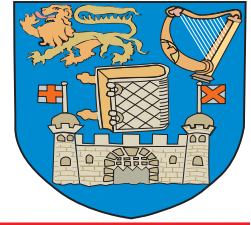


Research News at TCD



Advances in Research and Education at Trinity College Dublin

Professor Dermot Kelleher, Head of School & Vice Provost for Medical Affairs

Trinity College Dublin is a research led university and is currently the only Irish university sitting within the top 100 universities in the world. This position is largely achieved on the basis of research excellence and this excellence is driven by many of the people who have taught you or will teach you in the course of your careers. The School of Medicine has many successful research departments and the work which is discussed here really represents a small fraction of the total efforts in progress at TCD. At AMNCH Hospital in Tallaght, work is progressing on the creation of an Institute for Preventative Medicine. Prof. Colm Ó'Moráin is an international expert in the field of *Helicobacter pylori* and indeed has written some of the most cited papers in the world in this field. Prof. Conlon is developing a powerful capacity in gene-chip technologies to match with the clinical capacity of his unit in Pancreatic Research. Prof. John Reynolds is, similarly, an international leader in the field of oesophageal cancer research and his group have made substantial strides in the identification of mechanisms involved in the pathogenesis of this cancer and in resistance to chemotherapy in this condition. Dr. Joe Keane has commented in another article in this area on the work of medical students in the identification of a molecular signature for lung cancer and this outstanding work was published in 'Nature Medicine' this year. Dr. Alan Irvine, Consultant Dermatologist, has published a series of papers in 'Nature Genetics' which exemplified the level of excellence for which our institution strives.

These publications have resulted in the identification of genes for common diseases such as eczema and his work at the Institute of Molecular Medicine will continue to attempt to define the functional importance of these genetic mutations. Trinity College has a powerful reputation within the area of Neurosciences and work by Prof. Marina Lynch, Prof. Michael Gill and Prof. Roseanne Kenny fully exemplify our strengths in this area with a series of publications in high ranking journals over the last year. Of note, Prof. Harald Hampel has recently joined as Professor of Psychiatry at AMNCH and his expertise lies in the use of advance MRI imaging to identify functionally what parts of the brain are active or inactive within processes such as Alzheimer's Disease. Prof. Hampel provides powerful research strength within the School and will undoubtedly collaborate with his colleagues in creating a new research impetus in this area. There are many other powerful areas of research which have not been cited in this brief review.

It is important that we communicate this exciting work to our medical students as this is the cornerstone of the process of continuing medical education with lifelong learning driven by curiosity. Research does not have to be high-tech to make an impact. Careful clinical observation and the identification of new syndromes or new combinations of symptoms and signs are crucial for the development of our future knowledge in medicine. The importance of clinical observation cannot be overstated. It remains the cornerstone of all medical research and the questioning mind is the most important attribute of the medical researcher. This year, we aim to launch our new Masters Programme in Medical Science as an intercalated degree. We believe that this will provide a new and exciting entrée into medical research for students.