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The Faculty of Health Sciences  
presents

# The Inaugural Lecture of Professor Colin Doherty |

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# A Dark Continent?

Professor Colin Doherty MD FRCPI FFESM DLQ



Colin Doherty holds the Ellen Mayston Bates Chair in Epileptology at Trinity College Dublin and has just been elected to the position of Head of School of Medicine. He graduated from UCD in 1991, trained in Medicine and Neurology at St Vincent's hospital where he met the love of his life, Sinead who was in her final year of Nursing. She went on the Coombe to qualify as a midwife, and he moved to Beaumont in 1994.

Colin did his MD in brain computer morphometry while also developing an interest in prosody, the melody of speech. Colin and Sinead Married in 1995 and Colin left to start residency in the US a week after his first son, Jack, was Born in the Coombe. The family was reunited a month later in Boston where he enrolled in the Harvard neurology training programme at the Brigham and Women's & Massachusetts General Hospitals. His second son, Cormac was born in 2000 and Colin was appointed Chief Resident in 2001. He completed Fellowships in Epilepsy and Cognition at MGH 2001-2003 and returned home to Ireland 3 weeks after the birth of their third boy Eoin.

He became only the second consultant neurologist at St James's hospital in 2005, developing the epilepsy service into the second largest in the county. He also started the first behavioural neurology clinic for young onset dementia in Ireland in 2007. In the summer of 2020, he joined the staff of Trinity in the Academic Unit of Neurology as Chair in Epileptology after the generous bequest of the Ellen Mayston Bates estate. Finally, Milo, the last of 4 boys, was born in 2006. Colin was appointed clinical lead for the National Epilepsy Care Programme in 2010.

*Inaugural lectures provide newly appointed professors with the opportunity to showcase their academic activity to the College community and members of the public. An inaugural lecture is a significant event in an academic staff member's career. At Trinity College, inaugural lectures are a ceremonial occasion, which is why academic robes are worn by the inaugural professor and the rest of the platform party.*

Colin has clinical and research interests in the areas of brain imaging, clinical epileptology, Traumatic Brain Injury, Digital Medicine, Quality Improvement, and Inclusion Health. He is also a Principal investigator at the FutureNeuro SFI Research Centre in Dublin. In the last decade, he has become interested in the challenges of population health, health services research and policy and medical education.

Colin was a member of the Irish government's expert group on resource allocation in the health sector (2011). He was a member of the National Clinical Effectiveness Committee in Ireland from its inception in 2011 to 2015 and represented the RCPI on The Irish Patient Safety Steering Group 2012-2015. He was a board member of the Health Research Board (2010-15) and was the Irish representative to the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE) committee for the Global Campaign Against Epilepsy. He is currently an advisor to the International Neurological Ketogenic Society and clinical lead for the women's health programme in epilepsy.

After a lifetime of medical practice, clinical and translational research, teaching students at all levels and service redesign and implementation, Colin states that here are only two transformative elements in health care. The first is the willingness to learn from and include patients in their own healthcare decisions and the second is love. Without these, teaching, research, healthcare delivery, improvement and progress are both fruitless and meaningless.