



**Trinity College Dublin**  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin



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The Faculty  
of Health Sciences  
presents

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25th January 2024

The Inaugural Lecture  
of Professor

**Professor  
Susan Smith**



## Academic General Practice: Messy but worth it.

Professor Susan Smith

Susan is the Professor of General Practice at Trinity College Dublin. She graduated from TCD in 1987 having married David, a fellow medical student. She did her GP training in Ireland and South Wales. She then completed an MSc (economics) in Health Policy and Planning in the University of Swansea. She and David moved on to London, Oxford (where twins James and Patrick were born), Manchester and then Australia. In total they have moved house 17 times, reflecting the challenges of combining two medical careers in one marriage. The advantage was a very wide exposure to different types of general practice and health systems. They settled back in Ireland in 1998, and Catherine was born in 2005.

Susan completed an MD leading a cluster trial of diabetes shared care while working as a lecturer with Prof Gerard Bury in UCD. She then moved to TCD to work as lecturer and then Senior Lecturer with Prof Tom O'Dowd, conducting more trials in diabetes care delivery but gradually shifting towards addressing the reality of her patients experiences – living with multiple long term conditions or multimorbidity. She moved to RCSI as Associate Professor and then Professor of Primary Care Medicine, working with Prof Tom Fahey who was leading the HRB Primary Care Research Centre. She returned to TCD in 2022 as Professor of General Practice to work with a broad range of colleagues across the Discipline of Public Health and Primary Care including the Centre for Health Policy and Management. Her Chair is supported by Tallaght University Hospital. She chairs the Academic Primary Care Collaboration (APCC) between Tallaght University Hospital, HSE CHO7 Primary care and TCD, which supports a range of education, teaching, research and advocacy activities including a large cohort study of medical exercise in CHO7 with ExWell Medical, with Dr Noel McCaffrey. She is also Academic Chair for Healthy Trinity and is Director of Health Policy and Engagement in the School of Medicine.

Susan's research relates to the primary care of patients with chronic conditions with a focus on improving outcomes for patients with multimorbidity and related clinical issues such as medicines management. She has been the lead or co-investigator on ten HRB funded randomised controlled trials based in Irish general practice.

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Trinity College Dublin Faculty of Health Sciences

She leads the HRB Collaborative Doctoral Award in Multimorbidity and sits on the Advisory Panel for the Wellcome Trust Multimorbidity PhD Programme in Scotland. She is also Associate Director of the HRB Primary Care Clinical Trials Network of Ireland. Since completing a Cochrane Fellowship in 2004, she has had a long standing interest in evidence synthesis and is currently the Clinical Lead on the HRB Collaboration in Ireland for Clinical Effectiveness Reviews, a partnership with HIQA, providing Evidence Synthesis for NCEC Clinical Guidelines. She was a member of the COVID19 Expert Advisory Group providing Evidence Synthesis for NPHET during the pandemic and also sits on HIQA's Scientific Advisory Group. She is now a member of the Health Research Consent Declarations Committee.

She has had a longstanding interest in health equity and has coordinated the Deep End Ireland Group since 2012, which advocates for appropriate primary care services for socioeconomically disadvantaged groups and she also sits on the Deep End International group.

Susan has continued to work as a GP in Inchicore Family Doctors in Dublin 8, throughout her time in Dublin. She has been extremely fortunate in her clinical colleagues who provide a base for a rewarding clinical practice. Her clinical experience has also included working as a senior examining physician in the Centre for the Treatment of Survivors of Torture (SPIRASI) from 2004 to 2010. She continues to undertake medicolegal work, more recently for the Irish Medical Council. Her clinical practice underpins and informs her research and teaching and she is delighted to be contributing to a vibrant public health and primary care module for medical students that encourages a focus on critical thinking, health equity and integration of clinical skills and evidence synthesis to support clinical decision making.

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.