



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

The Faculty of
Health Sciences presents

The Inaugural Lecture of Professor Catherine Comiskey

26 March 2026

School of Nursing and Midwifery

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Professor Catherine Comiskey
School of Nursing & Midwifery

Challenging the status quo in addiction policy and practice: The role of evidence in changing the course of history from street-based HIV services to addressing alcohol use with AI

Professor Catherine Comiskey is a Professor of Healthcare Modelling, Global Addiction and Transformation at Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin. She holds a BA(Mod) and a MA in Mathematics and Philosophy from Trinity College Dublin and a MSc and PhD in biostatistics, biomathematics and epidemiology from Dublin City University. She was elected as a Fellow of Trinity College in March 2020. She was appointed as the Academic Director of the CHARM-EU Project (**CH**allenge driven **A**ccessible, **R**esearch led, **M**obile, **E**uropean University) (<https://www.charm-eu.eu/node/1>) in October 2020 and held the Chair of the International Academic Board and Academic Director of the Master's Program on Global Challenges for Sustainability for three years from 2020 to 2023.

She is the former Head of School of Nursing and Midwifery 2014-2017, Acting Head from Oct 2019-March 2020, Director of Research from 2008-2012 and Inaugural Director of the Trinity Centre for Practice and Healthcare Innovation 2012-2014. Her research is in epidemiology and addiction. She is a current member and the former Chair and Vice Chair of the Scientific Committee of the EUDA (European Union Drugs Agency). She is an invited expert to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, World Drug Report and a consultant to the International Narcotics Control Board. Nationally, She is the former ministerial appointed academic expert to the Irish National Drug Strategy Implementation Committee and served on the board of the Ana Liffey Drug Project for eight years from 2017 to 2025.



Catherine is the sole author of the book, *Addiction Debates, Hot Topics for Policy and Practice*, published by Sage UK in 2020 and sole author of, *Addiction Research and Evaluation, Addressing Key Challenges in Policy and Practice*, published by Springer, New York in 2024. She is also the author of over 200 research papers.

Catherine has held visiting professorial positions across a number South African universities working in a capacity development role with emerging scholars. This work has inspired her third book, an edited collection with Dr Elizabeth Curtis. It will be published in 2026 by *Springer* and is titled, *Capacity Development and Distributed Leadership in Tertiary Education: Transforming Global Healthcare, Research, Policy and Practice*.

Catherine holds awards for innovation, for research and for education and is passionate about bringing scholarly excellence and evidence to her work. She is inspired daily by her wider group of senior research fellows, Post-docs, PhD candidates, students and colleagues. On a personal note, she has both a rural Co Wexford and a Dublin upbringing and is from a family of four siblings, Paul, Geraldine, Anthony and Les. She is married to architect Peter Carroll and they have a son, Seán and three daughters, Shannon, Julia and Molly.

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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.

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