



Conference for Professionals and Caregivers Supporting the Health and Wellbeing of Adults with Down Syndrome



9.30am: Welcome

9.40 – 11.20am: Health awareness

- Vision and vision difficulties: *Lynda McGivney-Nolan*
- Regression: *Prof Sean Kennelly*
- Dementia: *Dr Antoinette O'Connor*
- Post Diagnostic Dementia Supports and Dementia Specific environments:
Prof Mary McCarron

11.20-11.30am: Coffee break

11.30 - 1pm: Living well

- Maintaining brain health: *Dr Eimear McGlinchey*
- Accessibility in health care: The Rosemary Project: *Dr Seán Healy, UL*
- Health passports: *Sandra Ferncombe (HSE)*
- Carers Allowance and the new Long-Term Carers Contributions scheme:
Claire Duffy, Family Carers Ireland
- Accessibility in healthcare: Supports and Resources: *Dr Owen Doody, UL*

1-1.45pm: Lunch

1.45-3.30pm: Ageing Well

- From Insights to Impacts: The IDS-TILDA Journey in Advancing Knowledge on Ageing and Intellectual Disability: *Prof Mary McCarron*
- Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour: *Dr Louise Lynch*
- Menopause and Women's Health: *Stephanie Corrigan*
- Medications Optimisation/appropriate prescribing older adults with an intellectual disability: *Dr Maire O'Dwyer*
- Oral Health: *Katrina Byrne*

3.30-4pm: Next steps - Discussion

- Concerns
- Suggestions
- Priorities for the Future



Lynda McGivney-Nolan DipOpt (Hons), MSc. FAOI. MBABO

Lynda is a specialist optometrist with 35 years' experience in neurodevelopmental, behavioural, and neurological vision disorders. Her MSc focused on paediatric and neurodevelopmental vision, and she holds further accreditations in neuro-optometry, CVI, brain injury rehabilitation, and visual processing. Since 2000, she has served as Clinical Director for the Special Olympics Opening Eyes Programme and was Clinical and Optometric Advisor to Optometry Ireland (2008–2024). She lectures widely on paediatric eye care, retinal pathology, medico-legal practice, special needs, brain injury, glaucoma, and diabetes. Lynda is also a senior research associate at UCD School of Engineering, studying visual processing in DCD and ADHD, and an officer of the Venerable Order of St John of Jerusalem, supporting eye hospitals in Jerusalem, Nablus, and Gaza.



Professor Sean Kennelly

Professor Kennelly is a consultant physician in geriatric and stroke medicine in Tallaght University Hospital (TUH) and Clinical Associate Professor of Medical Gerontology in Trinity College. He is clinical director of the National Intellectual Disability Memory Service in TUH. He is Director of the Institute for Memory and Cognition, and the Cognitive Clinical Trials Unit in Tallaght University Hospital, Dublin.



Dr Antoinette O'Connor

Dr Antoinette O'Connor is a graduate of UCC medical school who completed a PhD in familial Alzheimer's disease at University College London. She has also completed a clinical fellowship in neurodegenerative diseases at Tallaght University Hospital, where she is now working as a consultant neurologist. She has been awarded a HRB Emerging Clinician Scientist Award to lead a research programme investigating the use of blood biomarkers to advance the diagnosis and treatment of Alzheimer's disease in Down syndrome.



Prof Mary McCarron

Professor Mary McCarron, PhD RNID RGN BNS FAAN FTCD, is an internationally recognised leader in ageing and intellectual disability. She is Director of the Trinity Centre for Ageing and Intellectual Disability (TCAID) and Executive Director of the National Intellectual Disability Memory Service. Founder and Principal Investigator of IDS-TILDA, she has transformed understanding of ageing, dementia, and chronic conditions in people with intellectual disabilities. A Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing and Honorary Professor at Queen's University, she has secured over €20 million in research funding and continues to shape policy, research, and practice nationally and internationally.



Dr Eimear McGlinchey

Dr. Eimear McGlinchey is an Assistant Professor in Intellectual Disability at Trinity College Dublin and faculty member at the Global Brain Health Institute. With a background in psychology, her research focuses on brain health and dementia in people with Down syndrome. She leads the PREVENT Dementia-DS project and serves as Ireland's site lead for the Horizon 21 European Consortium, investigating early biomarkers of Alzheimer's disease in Down syndrome. Eimear is the Dementia and Brain Health Lead at the Trinity Centre for Ageing and Intellectual Disability and sits on the scientific committee of the Jérôme Lejeune Institute in Paris.



Associate Professor Dr Sean Healy

Dr. Sean Healy is an Associate Professor at the University of Limerick. Much of Dr. Healy's research focuses on physical activity for people with disabilities and health promotion of people with intellectual disabilities. Recent work as Principal Investigator on Ireland's portions of the Rosemary Collaboratory Project, which is a global report on assessing and advocating for inclusive healthcare systems for people with intellectual disabilities, has led Dr. Healy to work on a system wide level assessment of Ireland's healthcare system relating to access for people with intellectual disabilities, and he is continuing this work through advocacy efforts for system level change.

Ms. Sandra Ferncombe



Sandra Ferncombe, is a Project Lead in Healthcare on the National Disability Quality Improvement team. Sandra currently leads work on the Health Passport (HSE) a project designed to make communicating healthcare needs more accessible, person-centred, and inclusive for everyone. Her background in nursing has afforded her the opportunity to support and work directly with adults with an Intellectual Disability, and support them to avail of services across Residential, Respite and Day Services. This role also afforded her the opportunity to become actively involved in service development and quality improvement. Along with a BSc in Nursing, she completed post graduate studies in Palliative Care Nursing, Leadership and Management.

Claire Duffy



Claire has been the Policy and Public Affairs Manager with Family Carers Ireland since 2008 and is responsible for leading the organisation's policy and public affairs functions. She is passionate about securing positive change for family carers and works closely with Government and policymakers to help shape and advance carer policy. She has advocated for many years for better recognition and support for family carers particularly in relation to financial support, pension rights and healthcare.

Dr Owen Doody



Dr. Owen Doody works as an Associate Professor at the University of Limerick. Dr. Doody's work has focused on nursing education and healthcare research, with much of his work and research focusing on intellectual disability. He has contributed to research, focusing on person-centered care, nursing practice, and professional development. As a lecturer and researcher Dr Doody is dedicated to advancing nursing standards through education, research, and mentorship.

Dr Louise Lynch



Dr Louise Lynch is a Research Fellow with IDS-TILDA at the Trinity Centre for Ageing and Intellectual Disability (TCAID), where she has worked since 2017. She completed her PhD in 2023, which focused on sedentary behaviour levels in people with intellectual disabilities. Louise also holds a Master's in Food, Health and Nutrition and an undergraduate degree in Engineering. Her previous professional experience spans microelectronics engineering, personal training, and sales. She currently works on the EuCan project, exploring the unmet needs of Irish cancer patients from underserved communities, with a strong commitment to inclusive and applied health research.

Stephanie Corrigan



Stephanie is a final-year PhD student and Research Assistant with IDS-TILDA and TCAID. She holds a BA in Mathematics from Trinity College and an MSc in Psychological Science (Conversion) from Queen's University Belfast. Her PhD research explores menopause in women with intellectual disabilities, focusing on its psychological impact. Passionate about Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) and inclusive research methods, she advocates for approaches that empower marginalised groups. Her overarching aim is to share her findings accessibly with women with intellectual disabilities, their carers, and healthcare providers to enhance awareness and education on menopause.

Dr Máire O'Dwyer



Dr Máire O'Dwyer is an Associate Professor in the Practice of Pharmacy at the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Trinity College Dublin. She completed her PhD examining patterns of medication use in older adults with intellectual disabilities through the IDS-TILDA study and the School of Pharmacy at Trinity. She also holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Statistics from the School of Computer Science and Statistics, TCD. Her research interests include polypharmacy and pharmacotherapy in older adults with multimorbidity or intellectual disabilities, anticholinergic and psychotropic medication use, and advanced pharmacoepidemiology methods.

Katrina Byrne



Katrina Byrne (RNID, MSc) is an Assistant Professor in Intellectual Disability Nursing at the School of Nursing & Midwifery, Trinity College Dublin, and a final-year PhD student in Public Dental Health. A Registered Intellectual Disability Nurse with over 20 years' experience, her PhD explores the oral health of older adults with intellectual disabilities and its links to systemic health. She co-led the development of the Modified Oral Status Survey Tool (MOSST)—a validated, inclusive oral health assessment now informing national practice. Katrina has presented her work at global forums including the WHO, IADR, IADH, and IASSIDD.

