

#BeRCSI Bulletin 9

Dear Colleagues,

We hope that you are keeping safe and well as we continue to weather this challenging period together. While it is wonderful to see the continued roll out of the vaccination programme, transmission rates in the community in Ireland are still high and our hospitals and clinical colleagues remain under considerable pressure. We need to be patient and hold our resolve. That's not an easy ask of any of us. Many of us feel weary right now and it's hard to think that we will have to maintain this level of vigilance for some time to come. We are expecting a Government announcement on the impact of the vaccine roll-out and the implications on restrictions in Ireland on March 5, we will communicate further on how this will likely affect us and RCSI. We continue to ask you to be understanding towards each other and people's personal circumstances, and we encourage you to check in with each other and your own families, friends and neighbours on a personal level. The effects of this restrictive period are being felt by all but knowing someone cares and that we are all in this together, can help sustain us through this period.

It is hard to believe that on the 12th March it will be a year since the University was closed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. While it is not an anniversary we would want to celebrate, we feel that it is important to mark this day by providing an opportunity for reflection for both staff and students. Many of you will have been personally touched by bereavements within your families or wider circle of friends, which is why we will be acknowledging this by joining together online in a way that will allow us all to pause, to remember and to look forward with a positive outlook as an RCSI community. More details of this to come on WorkVivo in due course.

#Project6Challenge

We would like to congratulate Justin Ralph, Dave Harris and our Development and Alumni Relations team on the hugely successful launch of the #Project6Challenge on WorkVivo. We have thoroughly enjoyed seeing our RCSI community come together to motivate each other and get active while raising much needed funds for the Student Hardship Fund, almost €2000 raised in just one week! As you are aware, lockdown can be extremely difficult for us all and this is equally true for our students, many of whom are isolated many miles away from family and friends. Your support at this time is therefore all the more appreciated. If you haven't already done so, we would encourage you to accept the challenge if nominated and get involved with this fantastic initiative. We look forward to seeing all your posts on WorkVivo over the coming weeks.

Barry Holmes
Director of Human Resources

P.S - A special mention to Alan O'Gorman for his brilliant Star Wars inspired video! In case you have missed it or any of the posts you can view them here - <https://home.rcsi.com/hashtag/Project6challenge>

Steps to Health Team Challenge

Let's keep the physical health momentum going and get as many teams and departments involved in the RCSI Steps to Health- Dublin to Bahrain Challenge kicking off on **16th February**. We are racing our colleagues in RCSI Bahrain, will we make it there before they make it to Dublin?? Some of our favourite teams names so far include the Finance teams - *EXCEL-erators* and *The Accountables*, *The Covidators* from our Mercer Medical Centre colleagues and *The Swab Squad* from the RCSI Student Health Management. All teams will be revealed next week and Inspire will share weekly progress reports on where in the world teams are. You can sign your team or project group up [here](#).

Speaking of Fitness Fanatics! For this week's **Team Spotlight** piece we caught up with marathon man Bryan Sheils and our stellar Front of House Team.

When lockdown was announced last March 12th by the Irish Government, the entire Estates team were fully prepared, having activity participated in the BCP group meetings since early February, but now the mobilisation process needed to be implemented. As part of the Estates team, the Front of House team (consisting of myself (Bryan Sheils), Liz McNicholl, the Porters under the guidance of the Head Porter and deputy Head Porter, Frank Donegan and Hamid Khan, and supported by our service providers Security, Cleaners and Catering) were tasked with preparing the buildings for the impact of this initial lockdown and thereafter with preparing for reopening, whenever that might occur.

I recall leaving the Estates office after the staff announcement was made that lockdown was imminent and two of my colleagues from the Finance Department, Ann Cumiskey and Catherine Murray asked me "when would we get back to RCSI"? My response was hopefully not too long and we would be back after Easter. What I meant to say was post Easter **2021!**

The first priority for the Front of House team during lockdown was to secure all buildings whilst still ensuring that essential activities were facilitated. Throughout the lock downs the Estate and Support Services team maintained a presence on campus at all times. The cleaning service continued at a limited capacity with the exception of our "live" buildings; Smurfit building ERC Beaumont, Mercer GP and Rotunda remained unchanged. Catering was suspended with immediate effect.

Our Portering team under the stewardship of Head Porter, Frank Donegan continued as BAU and formed part of our own internal front line staff.

Barry Holmes
Director of Human Resources

In advance of lockdown myself and my colleague, Liz McNicholl had secured stocks and advance orders of additional hand sanitiser stands and cleaning kits. We worked with our suppliers to minimise lead times as these products as we know were very much in demand. I can still remember a morning back in March when a truck arrived with palettes of supplies which would cover us for a number of months, I didn't realise I could be so excited about hand sanitizer! I'm a great believer in partnership and our suppliers certainly stepped up to support us and continue to do so.

Not long after lockdown, the college working in partnership with the HSE and under the direction of Adrian Devitt, provided valuable city centre space to conduct the initial HSE Contract Tracing train the trainer courses - the initial course was hosted on St. Patricks day with the now famous Professor Sam McConkey and Professor Eva Doherty providing their expertise! This engagement provided Estates with a great platform to build on our relationships with HSE officials and allowed us to make our own contribution to the front line service - with ultimately over 4000 trainers trained.

My colleague Colm Murray and Anabel Dominquez reviewed all of our space capacity and determined the room capacities. In line with this, the mammoth task of removing all of the excess furniture was coordinated by Darren O Leary and placed in storage.

As the lockdown progressed and in preparation for some staff and students returning safely to campus in the initial phases in May and June we had to make the campus ready. It was critically important for staff and students to feel safe returning to the campus which was in line with HSE guidelines. Again the Front of House team and the wider Estates team and Facilities staff were to the fore of ensuring this.

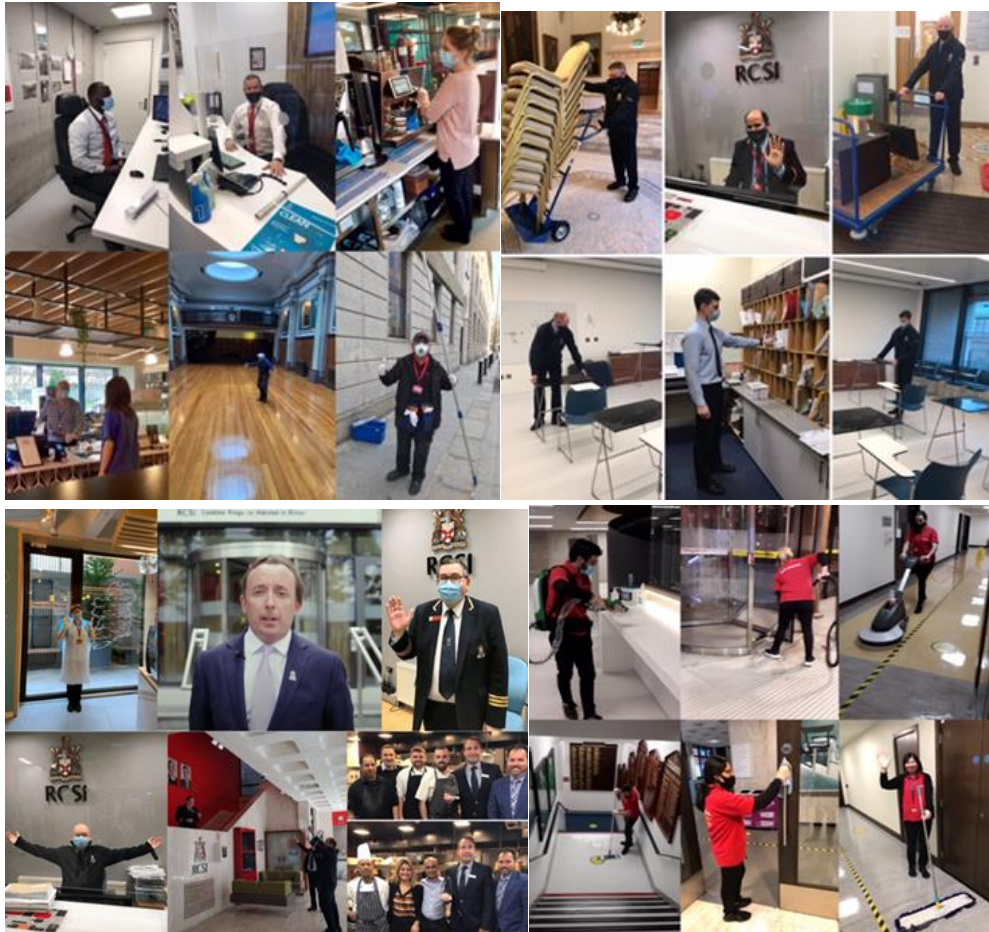
For our returning students for the new semester 21/22 it was a great opportunity for the Front of House team to support the mobilisation of Croke Park as a satellite campus. This was yet again a significant undertaking but it allowed for the best of collaboration (and much discussion/ debate and sleepless nights) working with fellow Academic staff and colleagues in Estate, Conference and Events, IT, Media Services, SARA, Gym etc. in conjunction external partners to achieve the creation of a satellite campus in record time.

We have missed so many on site annual events over the past year: orientation, freshers week, conferring's, white coat ceremony, faculty awards/dinners, heritage week, alumni gathering, our beloved staff Christmas party and most recently Charter week but we will see each other again on Campus over the coming months.

To support Front of House to deliver a safe and secure campus it is a joined up team approach involving a huge array of people and departments, SMT, BCP, our students and student union, many external partners and of course the wider Estate and Support Services team.

Looking forward to seeing you back on Campus, the first coffee is on me but until then stay positive, stay safe, wear your mask, keep your distance and stay at home!

Barry Holmes
Director of Human Resources



Financial Wellbeing

The Inspire Team have rolled out a number of information sessions to support our Financial Wellbeing over the first quarter. Over 225 staff virtually attended seminars lead by Health Insurance Industry expert Dermot Goode and Craig Bloom of HSF Health Plan, often securing staff fantastic savings and/or better cover at a time when both are critical. Some feedback from staff include *"I attended Dermot's webinar on health insurance - his knowledge is amazing! I switched plans as he recommended and got better cover cheaper price even though I wasn't overpaying to start with. Highly recommend attending his sessions", "If there was a mastermind category for Irish Health Insurance, Dermot would, without question, be the winner. Fantastic and really helpful presentation. I renewed my policy today with much more confidence that I had chosen the correct plan. Many thanks to Dermot and the organisers!"*

To continue with this theme Inspire have engaged with Bank of Ireland, our financial advice partners, to schedule a series of financial talks throughout the year to support your own personal journey. The first of these talks will focus on **'Saving and Investing'** and will take place on Tuesday 9th March at **Barry Holmes** Director of Human Resources

12pm with time for a Q&A. You do not need to be a BOI customer to benefit from attending these sessions. You can [sign up here](#), watch out for more information on WorkVivo in the coming days.

Ending this week's bulletin with this lovely Charlie Mackesy picture that really spoke to us, remember, you have survived 100% of your hardest days so far, better days will come.

Keep safe and well,

Barry & the HR Team



Barry Holmes
Director of Human Resources

RCSI Human Resources