



Internal Memo

To: All RCSI Staff & Council
From: Cathal Kelly (CEO)
Subject: **CEO Monthly Update**
Date: 5th April 2012

Dear Colleague,

I was pleased to be able to talk to so many of you at the various meetings to discuss our emerging strategic process. I have received some feedback from the sessions that there is a view taken that the strategy is *done and dusted*. Nothing could be further from the truth. Shortly after Easter we will begin an active engagement with all staff through a number of workshops. I know there is a great wealth of knowledge in the organisation and I want to harness everybody's energy and input.

For those of you unable to attend any of the sessions it is now available as a podcast on the staff portal.

School of Pharmacy

Steve Kerrigan from the School of Pharmacy, along with colleagues from the University of Bristol, has discovered that oral bacteria that escape into the bloodstream can cause blood clots and trigger life-threatening growths on heart valves. The research was recently presented at the Society for General Microbiology's Spring Conference. Further research arising from this study could lead to new drugs to tackle infective heart disease.

Congratulations to **Alice Holton** of Senior Cycle Pharmacy who won the Pharmacy Law and Ethics Association (PLEA) prize for her essay in bio-ethics. The PLEA competition, from which entrants are invited from all Schools of Pharmacy in the UK, was extended to the Irish Schools of Pharmacy this year and RCSI is delighted to have one of its students ranked first across the UK and Ireland which is strong quality metric for the RCSI undergraduate B.Sc. (Pharm.) programme.

Well done to **James Barlow, Helena Kelly, Judith Strawbridge** and **Michelle Flood** in organising the first RCSI-Scavenger Hunt amongst academic staff and students from the undergraduate and M. Pharm. programmes. The alcohol-free event was to raise awareness and funds for the Pharmacy Benevolent Fund which assists pharmacists and their families who experience financial hardship. Academic staff and over 130 students participated across the city in a meticulously organised event which raised 1000 euro for the Benevolent Fund.

Many thanks to **Ciaran Meegan** (RCSI-Hon Senior Clinical Lecturer), **Debbie Davies** (Clinical Pharmacy/Peamount Hosp) and **Ben Ryan** for their organization of interview skills training for Senior Cycle students as they prepare to secure places for their internship. RCSI is committed as part of the

new emerging strategy to extend its role from teaching to assisting students in creating professional opportunities and careers. Further on that note many thanks to **Sally Ann Cryan** (Senior lecturer and Research Convener of the School) for organising an inter-school (University of Dublin) career evening, sponsored by Actavis Pharmaceuticals, for third year and fourth year pharmacy students, outlining the many alternate career opportunities for pharmacy graduates in non-clinical settings (pharmaceutical industry, regulatory).

Congratulations to **Zeibun Ramtoola** (Senior lecturer and member of Faculty Executive) and **Fiona O'Brien** for organising the first RCSI symposium in regulatory affairs. This symposium which is aimed primarily for graduate of the RCSI-M.Sc. (Industrial Pharmaceutical Science) provides a valuable opportunity for establishing links with our alumni by providing them with new technical, regulatory and legal information in the ever dynamic world of the pharmaceutical industry. It further strengthens our on-going relationship with Pharmaceutical Industry and establishes RCSI as the premium provider of education to the 'qualified person'.

Institute of Leadership

Ruairi Quinn TD Minister for Education and Skills recently visited the Institute of Leadership in Reservoir House, Sandyford. The Minister met with **Ciaran O'Boyle, Pauline Joyce, Sibeal Carolan** and myself where we discussed a number of issues facing the national education system. He then addressed a group of Masters students from the Institute and spoke about leadership and education in Ireland. He was very complimentary about RCSI's contribution to higher education, especially internationally.

Department of Geriatric Medicine

Cora McGreevy and **David Williams** from the Department of Geriatric Medicine have recently had a paper published in the Annals of Internal Medicine. Their research has revealed new insights into the evidence linking Vitamin D deficiency and cardiovascular disease. Their research concluded that further large-scale studies are needed to prove that vitamin D supplementation has a role in protecting people from cardiovascular disease. Until further research is complete, vitamin D cannot be recommended as a treatment for preventing heart disease.

REACH Sports Day

The Annual REACH sports day took place last week in glorious sunshine. Almost 100 hundred young children had a fantastic day out thanks to the staff and students of RCSI. It really is always a great day for the children from our local community. Without the support of our staff the event just would not have been such a success. Our thanks to **Peter Kellaghan** (Anatomy), **John O'Halloran** (Finance), **Julie Jordan** (Finance), **Lisette Biggins** (Surgical Training), **Aoife Bates** (Surgical Training), **Roisin Bradley** (HR), **Deirdre Fahy** (HR), **Sarah McDonagh** (HR), **Deirdre O'Donnell** (Pastoral Care/Chaplaincy), **Kiera Thomas** (O'Rourke) (med Faculty) and **Bryan Shields** (Porter)

Special thanks to **Frank Donegan** (Porter) and **Aidan Kavanagh** (Sports Co-Ordinator) who really put huge effort and time.

Finally, our thanks to **Cara McVeigh** and **Aoife Congdon** (Events) who masterminded the planning of the event with **Maria Kelly** (REACH).

Mini Med Lecture Series

My thanks to **Kevin McGuigan** and **Maria Morgan** who once again led the management and organisation of yet another successful mini med lecture series which concluded last week. It is a testament to the quality of the programme that each year these lectures are a sell out. The value of such generous giving of time and expertise is hard to quantify but I have no doubt it changes many people's views of RCSI from possibly unknown or unsure to entirely positive.

I would also like to thank our academic colleagues who contributed to the programme: **Arnold Hill, Paul Byrne, Seamus Sreenan, John McDermott, Alice Stanton, Frances Horgan, Susan Smith, Ronan Conroy, John M. O'Byrne** and **Garry Duffy**

Finally thanks to **Aoife Congdon (Events), Agnieszka Grzaslewicz (Events), Oliver O'Flanagan (Media Services)** and **Bryan Shields (Portering Staff)** who provided support in the organisation of the lecture series.

Student Journal

The fifth annual RCSIsmj was published earlier this month. It is a high quality publication which gets great praise from many guests of the College and a great credit to our students.

79th Biological Society Meeting

The 79th Biological Society Inaugural Meeting took place at the beginning of March. The Biological Society is the oldest student society in RCSI and many leading lights of the College have served as President over the years. I congratulate **Mr Harold Browne** on becoming this year's President of the Society. With over 60 years of teaching, **Mr Browne** continues to inspire generations of undergraduates.

International Night

International Night is one of the jewels in the student calendar. Once again this year, the prestigious Mansion House acted as venue for the evening which celebrates the diversity of cultures that is RCSI. The Societies Union and the Student Services Office had worked on this event for months, and their dedication and commitment certainly paid off on the night. Congratulations and well done to the teams in **Admissions, Welfare office, Chaplaincy, Faculty** and **Student Services** for the excellent organization of this important event in the student calendar.

International Gourmet Food Night

On Friday 16 March the International Food Night provided our talented student body with an opportunity to show off their culinary skills. In all seventy three different dishes were on offer. As well as being a fun festival of food, a 'best dish' competition also took place. Again thanks to the teams in **Student Services** and **Student Welfare** for their hard work in making the event such a success.

Fundraising for Irish Hospice

Student Services recently supported a series of charity fundraising events led by **Celine Marmion**. These events included a Bachelor/ette Auction which sparked a frenzy of bidding for lunch with **Clive Lee**. Other events included a Table Quiz, an Xbox/PS3 tournament and "RCSI's Got Talent" – a showcase of the varied talents our students possess. Over €4,000 was raised which will be donated to the Hospice. Congratulations to **Celine** and the team of talented and enthusiastic students.

Medical Commencement programme.

The Medical Commencement Programme which is jointly delivered by RCSI and the Institute of Technology in Tralee has received a boost with the addition of 21 Iraqi Sponsored Students. The students will spend the next year and half in Tralee and on successfully graduating from MCP join the medical programme in Dublin in September 2013.

These are the first group of Sponsored Students to leave Iraq following the recent years of turbulence. RCSI are delighted to be part of the reconstruction programme and the arrival of these students re-establishes the educational links between RCSI and Iraq.

Special thanks must go to **Philip Curtis**, Head of Admissions RCSI and to **Elizabeth Healy** and **Joe McGarry** (based in ITT Tralee) for their work in ensuring the successful delivery of this project.

Work is now underway in relation to receiving Postgraduate MSc and PhD students.

IT Department

In order to protect RCSI confidential and personal information and to comply with data protection legislation, the IT Department have purchased and tested new data encryption software that will be deployed to all RCSI staff laptops, desktop computers and any other portable devices such as USB keys. Special mention to **Ciaran Kennedy** and **Ciaran Butler** of the IT Department for their work on this project. Over the coming weeks and with the support of the HR Department, a data security awareness programme will be communicated to all staff.

Finally, may I wish you and your families a very Happy Easter and I hope you enjoy the break.

Best wishes

Cathal