Dr Conor O’Carroll is an expert in the development of higher education policy, research funding strategies and proposal development. He is also an expert in Peer Review and active evaluator for a number of national and international organisations including the Irish Research Council, Health Research Board and European Commission (Horizon 2020). Conor was the Irish Delegate to the European Steering Group on Human Resources and Mobility (SGHRM) that drives European policy on Researcher Career Development and Mobility (2007 - 2017) and Chair from 2012-2017.

He has also led the InterTradeIreland Competitive Partnerships in Horizon 2020 programme to foster greater North/South research and innovation collaboration (2015-2017) and led the development and delivery of European policy; for example, the Principles of Innovative Doctoral Training, broadening employment opportunities for PhD graduates, now embedded in European Higher Education policy and the Horizon 2020 funding programme.

Dr Patricia Clarke is the National Delegate for EU Horizon 2020 Societal Challenge Health, Demographic Change and Wellbeing. Her participation in the Horizon 2020 Programme Committee involves integrating Irish interests into EU consultations, contributing to shaping content priorities in the relevant Work Programmes, feeding expertise gained into Irish discussions, working with National Delegates from other Member States to agree joint interests or joint actions, and maintaining informal contacts with EU officials. As Programme Manager for Policy and for EU Funding she leads the HRB approach on participation in EU cofunded public-public partnerships in health research.

She is a graduate from Queens University Belfast and the University of Birmingham UK where she completed her doctorate in health behaviour change and also holds an MSc in Computer Applications. She has a long-standing interest in policy and research having previously worked in the NHS in London and with the Centre for Cross Border Studies, a UK-Ireland cross-border policy research centre.

Professor Louise Gallagher (MB MRCPsych PhD) is Chair in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Trinity College Dublin and a Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist in the HSE/ National Children’s Hospital, Tallaght. She completed her medical training in University College Dublin in 1994 and trained in Psychiatry in the Dublin University Training Scheme at St. Patrick’s and St. James’s Hospital. Following the award of a Wellcome Trust Mental Health Training Fellowship, she completed her PhD on autism genetics in the Department of Psychiatry, Trinity College and subsequently completed Higher Specialist Training in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

During the course of her PhD she established a research group in Autism Genetics and this group is actively involved in the investigation of genetic vulnerability factors contributing to autism. The group is part of a large international collaboration of autism researchers, the Autism Genome Project (AGP) and Prof. Gallagher is one of the Senior Investigators of this research program. She is the principal investigator of The Autism Simplex Collection (TASC), which is an international collaborative effort to establish a repository of autism trios in association with Autism Speaks, AGRE and the NIMH. Prof. Gallagher has a busy clinical practice involving an autism spectrum disorders pre-school assessment service in the National Children’s Hospital and a community based Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service in Clondalkin.

Dr Maura Hiney has a PhD in Molecular Diagnostics and Epizootology from the National University of Ireland Galway. She is currently Head of Post-Award and Evaluation with the Health Research Board, Ireland. From 1990-1999 she worked as a senior researcher and managed a disease diagnostics service for the Irish fisheries industry and from 2000-2007 Maura was Head of Research Support Services for NUI Galway. She has been influential in raising awareness of research integrity (RI) issues in Ireland since 2007 and was instrumental in establishing a National RI Forum of key stakeholders and developing a national RI framework for broad adoption. Internationally, Maura chaired a Working Group of ESF Forum on RI, is a member of the European Network of RI Offices (ENRIO) and chaired the Science Europe Working Group on RI. She was a key...
Dr Pancras Hogendoorn is Professor of Pathology at Leiden University, The Netherlands, and a senior pathology consultant at the Leiden University Medical Center. Currently Dr. Hogendoorn serves as Member and Dean in the Executive Board of the Leiden University Medical Center in Leiden, The Netherlands. He completed his Medical and PhD studies at Leiden University followed by his residency in anatomic pathology. He completed fellowships in oncological pathology at the Dutch Cancer Institute, Amsterdam and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York.

For the last 25 years, his scientific research has focused on the pathogenesis, morphology and molecular pathology of bone- and soft tissue tumours, resulting in over 400 original publications, several review articles and 23 book chapters. He has organised and given several national and international pathology courses over the past 15 years in 5 continents. He served as overall Editor of the 2012 edition of the World Health Organisation on classification of tumours of soft tissue and bone. He received a membership of honour in recognition of his repeated courses on pathology of bone tumours from the Belgium Society of Pathology, the European Oswald Vander Vekenprijs (2008), as well as the Corinne Farrel Award (International Skeletal Society) twice (1994 & 1998), and the Jeremy Jass prize for research excellence in 2011 and 2016, as well as prices for postgraduate teaching. He holds a prestigious chair as visiting professor at the University of Oxford and the University of Brussel. He was coordinator of a European Community Grant application on behalf of 21 European institutes aiming at the formation of a European Network of Excellence in pathology and genetics of bone tumours (www.EuroBoNet.eu).

Currently he is member in the steering committee of the Dutch Research Agenda (‘Nationale Wetenschapsagenda’) on behalf the Dutch Academic Health Centers (AHC). Furthermore, in 2015-2016 he served as co-chair in the committee which formulated the National Plan for Sustainable Health, focussing on the research and educational agenda for the Dutch AHC.

Dr Avril Kennan has a PhD in genetics and many years subsequent lab experience working on human genetic conditions. She moved from the lab in 2007 to become a patient advocate with DEBRA Ireland. In her role there, as Head of Research and Advocacy, she led a number of international initiatives including the development of evidence-based clinical guidelines and an international patient registry. Dr Kennan has sat on many Boards and Committees, including the DEBRA International Executive Committee and the Rare Diseases Ireland Board. In her role as CEO of the MRCG she is passionate about supporting medical research charities and promoting their role in society. She was one of the founders of the Irish Health Research Forum.

Dr Jacinta Kelly was appointed as Chief Executive of the NCRC in June 2015. Jacinta has a BA (Mod) and a PhD in Immunology from TCD, and an MA in Management. She joined the NCRC in 2009 as Deputy Director of Research and has had a role in the strategic development and management of the Centre since then. She has extensive experience in third level education and research. She also has international experience in scientific publishing and communication with Elsevier and with Hogrefe and Huber Publishers. She is currently a Board Member of the Medical Research Charities Group; a member of the steering group of the Irish Health Research Forum, and a member of the ethics committee of the Faculty of Health Science, TCD.

Dr Matthew Westmore is the Operations Director for the NIHR Evaluation, Trials and Studies Coordinating Centre (NETSCC - www.nihr.ac.uk). The NIHR’s approach is underpinned by the AViR Framework. Matt leads a cross-NIHR programme of work aimed at maximising the impact of research, reducing waste and Adding Value in Research (AViR). Matt is also a co-convenor of an international forum of funders who are interested in sharing best practice, entitled Ensuring Value in Research (EViR).

Philip Watt is chairperson of the Medical Research Charities Group (MRCG). MRCG is at the forefront of promoting medical research in Ireland from a patient perspective. MRCG established and supports the Irish Health Research Forum. Philip has been CEO of Cystic Fibrosis Ireland since 2009 and has worked to overhaul CF services in Ireland and to promote access to new and innovative therapies.

Philip is currently chairperson of the Irish Donor Network (IDN) which has been active in advocating for higher donor and transplant rates and in changing the organ donor consent approach in Ireland. He is also Chair of the Rare Disease Taskforce and is author of a wide range of books and articles on social policy, poverty and equality issues.

Originally from Belfast, Philip is a graduate of TCD and the University of Ulster and is the author of the Irish Government’s National Action Plan against Racism (2005-2008), he was coordinator of the national focal point in Ireland for the EU Fundamental Rights Agency based in Vienna (2008) and was CEO of the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCR) from 1998 to 2007.

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