

Clinical Academic Pathways

Combining Research and Clinical Practice

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Winter Course in Clinical Research

February 2026

ST JAMES'S
HOSPITAL



Career Development

Academic Experience

BSc Physiotherapy, Trinity College Dublin (2011)

MSc, MSK Physiotherapy, UCD (2012)

Clinical Experience

Staff Grade Physiotherapist, St James's Hospital (2012-2018)

Career Development

Research Skills Developed

- Finding and using research in clinical practice
- Service developments: ability to ask a research question, collect data, interpret results
- Write an abstract and submit to conference
- Create a poster
- Ethics applications

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Career Development

Academic Experience

BSc Physiotherapy, Trinity College Dublin (2011)

MSc, MSK Physiotherapy, UCD (2012)

PhD, Trinity College Dublin (2014 - 2018)

Clinical Experience

Staff Grade Physiotherapist, St James's Hospital (2012)

Locum St Vincent's Private Hospital (2015-2018)

Career Development

Research Skills Developed

- Project management – multi-centre randomised controlled trial
- Research processes and procedures - Cancer Trials Ireland
- Different research settings and types
- Data analysis – postgraduate cert completed
- Preparing and submitting manuscripts – related to study and PhD question
- Grant Applications – bringing collaborators together

Career Development

Academic Experience

0.5 WTE Post-doctoral Research Fellow, Trinity College
Dublin

- HRB funded RCT PRE-HIIT Study
- Irish Cancer Society Funded AHP Stimulus Award
2019 – *Cancer Survivorship Feasibility Study*
- Irish Cancer Society Allied Health Professional
Research Leadership Award – 18 months research
funding in head and neck cancer

Clinical Experience

0.5 WTE Senior Physiotherapist in Cardio-thoracics, St James's
Hospital

- Established the St James's Hospital Surgical Oncology
Prehabilitation Service (2018)
- Established the St James's Hospital **Cancer Rehabilitation**
Service (2021)
- Permanent NCCP Funding 2022

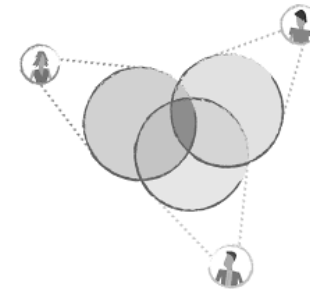
Career Development

Challenges

- Separate employers/job descriptions/role profiles
- Support needed from management at all levels – need for good understanding of dual roles
- Difficulties with time/schedule management – volume and timing
- $0.5+0.5$ WTE \neq 1 FTE
- No long term security

Towards an Evidence-Based and Stakeholder Informed Model of Rehabilitation for People with Haematological Cancer

HRB Emerging Clinician Scientist Award



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emails • Submit proposal for patient representative group meeting • Correct Article Proofs 	Clinical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-service • Staff grade training • Outpatients • Psycho-oncology talk • Lunchtime Class 	Clinical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haem/Oncology Ops Meeting • Outpatients 	Clinical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triage List • Outpatients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emails • Europe Cancer Physiotherapy Group Meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient Presentation for Study • Create Survey for head and neck study – send for trial 	Clinical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outpatients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient recruitment at clinic and follow up • Data Entry 	Clinical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outpatients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient representative group meeting



Training opportunities

Clinical practice

Leadership development

Academic (Research)

Qualified non-graduate Health Professionals

All Registered Health Professionals

Qualified non-graduate Health Professionals

Health Professionals working in Clinical Research Environment

Consolidating and developing confident clinical knowledge and skills

Developing specialist knowledge, skills and expertise underpinned by theory

Highly developed specialist knowledge, skills and expertise underpinned by theory and experience

Advanced theoretical and practical knowledge

Level 5
Practitioner

Masters Level
MRes or PhD training fellow

Level 6
Senior practitioner

Doctoral Level
Doctoral Training Fellow

Level 7
Advanced practitioner

Post Doctoral Level
Senior Research Fellow

Level 8
Consultant practitioner

Senior Clinical Academic
Reader

Level 9
Clinical professor

Training opportunities

Exposure to research in clinical practice

Training programmes provided by networks and clinical research facilities etc.

NIHR or other award scheme
Employer or self-funded

NIHR or other PhD award scheme
Employer or self-funded

NIHR or other award scheme or Trust/HEI post with training programme

NIHR or other award scheme or Trust/HEI post with training programme



Entry point at Masters is indicative. It is acknowledged that some professionals enter at MSc/MA

Organisational Benefits of Research Clinical Academic Roles



Engaging in Research

- Join national or international networks or create local ones
- Reach out to an experienced academic/researcher
- Find a topic/project that you are really interested in
- Look for funding to support postgraduate research e.g Health Research Board, Irish Research Council, Professional Groups/Patient Organisations
- New initiatives eg. professional doctorate

Thank you

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HOSPITAL



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

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- Trusson, D., Rowley, E. and Bramley, L., 2019. A mixed-methods study of challenges and benefits of clinical academic careers for nurses, midwives and allied health professionals. *BMJ open*, 9(10), p.e030595.
- Cowley, A., Diver, C., Edgley, A. *et al.* Capitalising on the transformational opportunities of early clinical academic career training for nurses, midwives and allied health professionals. *BMC Med Educ* **20**, 418 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-020-02348-2>
- [Developing the Role of the Clinical Academic Researcher in the Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/91122/developing-the-role-of-the-clinical-academic-researcher-in-the-nursing-midwifery-and-allied-health-professions.pdf)
- Olive, P., Maxton, F., Bell, C.A., Bench, S., Tinkler, L., Jones, S. and Kenkre, J., 2022. Clinical academic research internships: What works for nurses and the wider nursing, midwifery and allied health professional workforce. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 31(3-4), pp.318-328.