



*“Help us shape the way palliative care research is conducted on the island of Ireland. Let’s increase the impact together”.*

## WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR MONIKA PILCH

Dear Early Career Researcher Forum (ECRF) Members,

Welcome to the September edition of our quarterly ECRF Newsletter. We are celebrating the expansion of the Forum as the ECRF membership increased from 96 to 170 during the last two years. We are also very proud of the ECRF achievements! We are honoured and delighted to have shaped the palliative and end-of-life research landscape with our actions.

We are delighted to share our latest blog, where Karen Carr discusses factors associated with the initiation of advance care planning by healthcare professionals providing paediatric palliative care. We also invite you to listen to our latest podcast, showcasing Dr Stacey Power-Walsh and her research. Stacey shared her experience of completing a PhD and undertaking Viva Voce during Covid-19 pandemic.

The ECRF Committee is very proud to ensure ECRF representation during the PCRN Annual Symposium 2020 and we look forward to seeing a continued engagement of early and mid- researchers in the 2021 event. Please check our events page to learn how to be involved. The ECRF Committee met with AIIHPC and PCRN to present the initial Networking project idea. We hope to co-design and launch the initiative during the next PCRN Annual Symposium, which will take place in December 2021.

We celebrate some of the recent successes of our members, including publications and grant successes. The ECRF Quarterly Newsletter itself continues to prompt discussions and ongoing conversations with our members. Thank you all for sharing your views and thoughts with us. Please continue letting us know about your most recent research achievements (please forward information to newsletter Editor, [Dr Deborah Muldrew](#)).

My term as the Chair of the ECRF Committee is coming to an end and I chose to give somebody else the opportunity to lead the ECRF Committee after that time. I would like to thank you sincerely for your ongoing support and assistance and please stay in touch ([pilchm@tcd.ie](mailto:pilchm@tcd.ie)). Wishing you all the best and let’s continue increasing the impact together!

Monika<sup>1</sup>  
Chairperson, AIIHPC ECRF Steering Committee

### Overview

- Podcast by Dr Stacey Power-Walsh
- Blog by Karen Carr
- Event highlight: PCRN Symposium
- Highlights from Palliative Care Week: 12-18 September 2021
- Member Celebrations

Follow us online at the [Professional Palliative Hub](#)  
Or on [Twitter](#)

Get in touch:  
Email the ECRF Committee [chair](#) or AIIHPC’s Palliative Care Research Network [Project Manager](#)



# AIIHPC

Early Career Researcher Forum

## ECRF PODCAST & BLOG



Dr Stacey Power-Walsh is an Assistant Professor in Children's Nursing in University College Dublin. She is a Registered Children's and Intellectual Disability Nurse with years' experience of caring for children with life limiting conditions and complex care needs. Stacey has a Masters in Palliative care and her PhD explored experiences of pregnancy with FFA.

### PODCAST

Within this podcast, Rachel McCauley speaks to Stacey about her PhD by publication 'Exploring experiences of pregnancy with a fatal fetal anomaly'. She describes how Covid-19 impacted on her PhD and her experience of undertaking her Viva Voce in December 2020 under Covid-19 restrictions.

She presents useful tips on how to prepare for a Viva Voce, in particular a virtual Viva Voce and most importantly encourages PhD students to enjoy the Viva Voce, a great opportunity to speak about the research undertaken.

**Available to listen to from 11<sup>th</sup> October at:**  
[tinyurl.com/ECRFpodcasts](https://tinyurl.com/ECRFpodcasts).

### BLOG

When a child is receiving palliative care, early conversations in a calm environment are recommended to identify family values, plan for future care and make decisions. However, these conversations often start too late, or during a crisis.

In the latest edition of our blog, Karen Carr explores the factors which influence the initiation of advance care planning by healthcare professionals providing paediatric palliative care. **Read here:**  
<https://tinyurl.com/CarrUU>



Karen Carr is a Registered Children's Palliative Care Nurse and PhD student in the School of Nursing at Ulster University. She is working on her PhD which is considering the factors influencing healthcare professionals' decisions to initiate paediatric advance care planning.



## EVENT SPOTLIGHT: 10th Annual PCRN Symposium 'Equality and Equity in Palliative Care'

The Palliative Care Research Network (PCRN) Symposium is an island of Ireland event that promotes the impact of palliative care research to improve practice and change policy in palliative care. In 2020, the ECRF members were invited to showcase their work at an abstract presentation session. In 2021, ECRF members will again be supported to contribute to this symposium on **2<sup>nd</sup> December**. This year's event will be online, and keynote speakers include Sam Royston Director of Policy and Research, Marie Curie UK, and Professor Merryn Gott, Director, Te Ārai Palliative Care and End of Life Research Group, School of Nursing, University of Auckland, New Zealand.

Written by: Dr Deborah Muldrew

*'I was delighted to be joint winner of the abstract presentation at the symposium. This was a great opportunity to present our study findings, and support from the PCRN made the process of preparing and delivering the presentation very manageable. Thank-you!'*

Quote from Dr Anne Fee, Joint Prize Winner at the 2020 ECRF abstract presentation session at the Symposium.

### Call to submit

Now open: Submit at  
[tinyurl.com/PCRNsymposiumCall4Abstracts](https://tinyurl.com/PCRNsymposiumCall4Abstracts).

### Submission closes

15<sup>th</sup> October

### Decision

25<sup>th</sup> October

### Outcome Shared

5<sup>th</sup> November

## Future events

### Improving Adult Bereavement Care, Support & Services, 6 October [online].

For more information and to book your place visit [Healthcare Conferences UK](#). 20% discount available with code hcuk20aiihpc

### EPEC – Pediatrics Education in Palliative and End-of-life Care 25-28 October [online]

Virtual Advanced Pain and Palliative Care Workshop. More information available [here](#)

### Hospice UK

3-5 November [Liverpool ACC] National Conference 'a new world - changing the landscape in end of life care'. Register [here](#)

### 11th APPM Paediatric Palliative Care Online Series

3-25 November [Online] For more information on the online series, visit the [APPM website](#)



## PALLIATIVE CARE WEEK 2021

### What is Palliative Care Week?

Palliative Care Week aims to raise awareness of the difference palliative care can make to people with a life-limiting illness, to carers and to families across the island of Ireland. The theme for Palliative Care Week 2021 was **Palliative Care: It's more than you think**. Palliative Care Week ran from 12 to 18 September. Highlighted below is one of the events held during this week, which aimed to engage members of the public with Music Therapy.

### Event Highlight: 'Music Therapy and Bereavement Seminar'

**What:** Public-facing seminar

**Where:** Online

**When:** Tuesday 14 September 2021, 18.00 – 19.00

**Who:** Dr Lisa Graham-Wisener (Lecturer of Health Psychology, QUB), and Dr Tracey McConnell (Marie Curie Senior Research Fellow, QUB)

“ This event provided an introduction to music therapy and bereavement which was informative, exciting, and offered a unique opportunity to listen to music therapy taking place in a real palliative care setting, including an audio recording of a piece of music played by a therapist and client.

Engagement was excellent; over 60 individuals attended the event, and the international audience shared some fascinating questions and insights from areas such as creative therapies, medicine, nursing, and psychology.

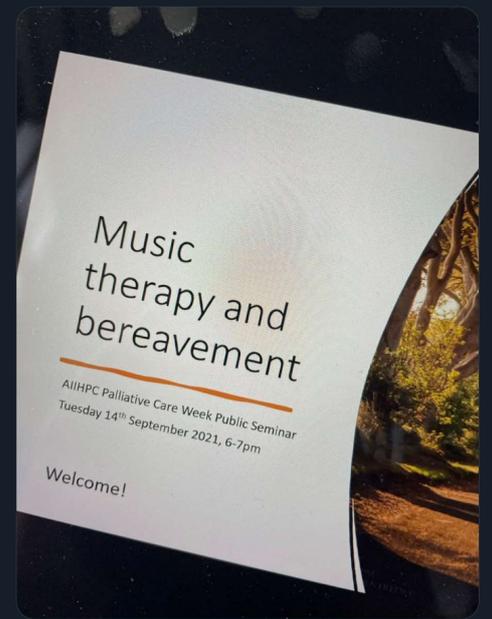
As an early career researcher who just started working in the areas of music therapy and palliative care earlier this year, I found the event particularly interesting as it provided a window into what music therapy work with a client entails from session to session in bereavement contexts. After the event, I felt proud to be conducting research in an area which is so valued by patients, families, and healthcare staff.

Dr Kathryn Gillespie



Compassionate Communities N... · 37m ...

Very interesting webinar from @QUBelfast as part of #pallcareweek on the role that music therapy can play at #eol and during #bereavement for patients, family and carers. #aaihpc #support #music #powerful



To view a recording of the event, please visit <https://tinyurl.com/MusicTherapyAndBereavement>.

You can find links to videos of Palliative Care Week events at the [AIIHPC YouTube channel](#)



## CELEBRATING OUR MEMBERS' ACHIEVEMENTS

**We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our ECRF members on all their hard work. Here are some examples of what our early career researchers have been working on:**

- We look forward to reading the latest paper published by ECRF member **Anita Mallon** on young adults' understanding and readiness to engage with palliative care, published in [BMC Palliative Care](#)
- Congratulations to ECRF member **Anne Fee** on her contribution to the publication on the impact of COVID-19 on our of hours adult hospice care, available in preprint on [Research Square](#)
- A short communication was published in [Patient Education and Counselling](#) by ECRF member **Jeff Hanna** on how professionals can support parents with incurable cancer to communicate with their dependent children
- A systematic review protocol on advance care planning for older adults in the community has been published by **Monika Pilch** in [HRB Open Research](#)
- ECRF Committee Member **Deborah Muldrew** has been successful in a grant application made to the Ulster University Early Career Researcher Impact Fund. The grant was used to host a public engagement event on advance care planning on 17<sup>th</sup> September during Palliative Care Week.

### Interested in sharing your successes?

If you would like us to share your successes through our newsletter, email updates, or twitter, please get in touch with our communications and social media officer, Dr Deborah Muldrew at [d.muldrew@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:d.muldrew@ulster.ac.uk). Information for Twitter can be shared at any time, but if you would like to be included in the Winter edition of the ECRF Newsletter, please send your information to us before 1st December 2021.

### We need your help!

We are looking for people who would like to support the work of the ECRF from the island of Ireland and are particularly interested in members who are based in Northern Ireland. Some activities you may be involved in include writing/editing blogs, participating in our podcast series, and hosting online-based activities (e.g., webinars).