

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

I undertook the Masters in Clinical Pharmacy at UCC at a time in my career that seemed to invite a return to the tenets of clinical pharmacy and when I had an appetite to see what other pharmacists were achieving throughout the world in terms of improving pharmacy services. The online nature of the course suited my work/life balance and the requirement to work in a clinical hospital environment while undertaking the course enhanced the learning experience. The master's curriculum was broad based in its clinical coverage and also introduced wider aspects of pharmaceutical care such as pharmacoepidemiology, pharmacovigilance and pharmaco-economics. The material presented was very relevant to the practice of clinical pharmacy within the Irish Healthcare setting. I felt supported and valued during my studies and formed a great bond with both academic teaching staff and fellow students, relationships which still endure. I believe that completion of the Masters in Clinical Pharmacy offered through UCC directly contributed to my career advancement. It gave me the professional courage to offer new and improved clinical pharmacist services to patients. It allowed the advancement of an academic element to my career which I am certain would not have been possible if I had not successfully graduated from the course. Furthermore I enjoyed the research element of the programme and have since undertaken further research projects that contribute to the knowledge base. A masters in clinical pharmacy is a natural next step for all pharmacists new to the hospital environment. I have since encouraged all pharmacist staff to take up the opportunity to attain a broad and deep insight into the care of hospitalised patients from a medication treatment perspective that is provided by the masters in clinical pharmacy at UCC.

Anne Harnett, Chief Pharmacist
University Hospital Limerick

I graduated with a first in the MSc in Clinical Pharmacy from UCC in December 2010. I would highly recommend the course to any hospital pharmacist that has not yet undertaken a post-graduate qualification. The course is very well structured and organised and I found the academic staff extremely helpful and supportive. Each module is supervised by either a hospital consultant or pharmacist working in that area of expertise which I also found very helpful. Having completed the course I was able to apply a lot of the clinical knowledge I had learned to my everyday role as a pharmacist in Cork University Hospital. The course material is very relevant and up to date. The course also allows the opportunity to undertake research work and subsequently I was able to get my research published in a medical journal.

Fiona Ahern, Senior Pharmacist
Cork University Hospital



I obtained my original degree in pharmacy back in 1999 and having practised solely in community pharmacy since my graduation, the decision to return to academia and enrol to complete MSc in Clinical Pharmacy was challenging. In retrospect, I believe this was one of the best decisions I have made. I found the course really interesting and very relevant to my practise. It helped me gain self-confidence and refine my skills in literature appraisal, problem analysis, decision making, oral and written communication. More importantly, the clinical case studies approach to learning helped me identify, prioritise and resolve drug therapy problems quickly and more efficiently. The course is intense, but the platform of the course fosters independent self-study to fit the busy pharmacists' work schedule. At the same time, the course not only provides access to up-to-date clinical resources, but experienced practitioners and hospital consultants are available to clarify and answer in depth any course or practise related questions during the teleconferences. I believe the course helped me overcome personal challenges and grow professionally. I am most grateful to my academic supervisors and the course coordinator for all encouragement, empowerment and support. After graduation, I am still employed as a community pharmacist, but the course catalysed my involvement in a local IVF clinic, which completely turned around my routine daily practise and had a positive impact on the entire pharmacy team and my employer's business.

Martin Kantchev
Community Pharmacy, Dublin



EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE

We operate a small family run community pharmacy in Clonmel, Co. Tipperary where we strive to optimise medication usage for patients. With that objective in mind, continuous development of our pharmacist staff is a key professional strategy for us in order to achieve our stated aim. All pharmacist staff are required to keep their training and expertise up to date as a requirement of their continued registration. In our practice we also require them to undertake postgraduate study if not already completed. The MSc program in Clinical Pharmacy at UCC has been our preferred choice of postgraduate study for our qualified pharmacists as quite simply it makes them better pharmacists. I have enjoyed watching their professional development as they progress through the course and the way in which they impact upon patient's pharmaceutical care. They are more confident in their role and in their dealings with other healthcare professionals. Most importantly they impact greatly on patients directly and further develop their role in patient care. The course fosters lifelong learning in participants which makes continuous professional development part of their professional lives and not just a registration requirement. I have seen graduates of this MSc become sought after team members elsewhere and can attest to their promotion across the grades to Supervising and Superintendent Pharmacist positions. In summary, the MSc in Clinical Pharmacy in UCC is an excellent choice for any pharmacist who is focussed on career progression and expanding their role to optimise the care of patients.

Rónan A. Quirke, Superintendent Pharmacist
Quirke's Pharmacy



The MUH has had a very positive experience with the UCC MSc in Clinical Pharmacy. This is evidenced by the fact that for every year over the past seven or eight years, a MUH employed pharmacist has undertaken this Masters. As well as upskilling our pharmacists in terms of clinical pharmacy knowledge this Masters has directly and indirectly contributed to a culture of research and innovation. This has equipped the Pharmacy Department to ably meet the ever increasing complexity of medication needs within the MUH. Having this skillset in the department is a great assurance that we can and are addressing medication safety concerns and optimising the management of medication.

Ciaran Hallernan, Chief Pharmacist
Mercy University Hospital

EXTERNAL EXAMINER PERSPECTIVE

I am delighted to hear of the continuing review of the UCC MSc in Clinical Pharmacy in line with external developments in healthcare and practice. This is an excellent course which goes from strength to strength.

Professor Dai John,
School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences
Cardiff University

Although the programme is distance-learning the team are aware of and sensitive to individual student's personal issues. The insightfulness is an example of good practice and very valuable when reviewing a module or the programme as a whole.

Professor Charles Morecroft
School of Pharmacy & Biomolecular Sciences
Liverpool John Moores University

