**Continence Foundation of Ireland**

**Annual Report 2014**

# Introduction by Chairperson: Dr. Suzanne O’Sullivan

# The Continence Foundation of Ireland (CFI) was founded in September 2005 by a group of 10 independent gynaecologists and urologists in Ireland with an interest in female incontinence and pelvic floor reconstructive surgery.

**The Aims of the Foundation are:**

* Improve the quality of life for people who suffer from incontinence.
* Raise public awareness, education and provide information about incontinence.
* Provide a comprehensive integrated approach to the prevention, treatment and management of incontinence.
* Ensure adequate resources are targeted at continence services and better value for money is achieved from resources allocated to incontinence.
* Coordinate the efforts of different organisations and other individuals interested in and affected by incontinence.

We welcome membership from all medical disciplines and allied health professionals.

All in our group work on a voluntary basis and receive no remuneration for their services or input.

**Committee:**

Chair: Suzanne O’Sullivan

Past Chair: Declan Keane

Secretary: Orfhlaith O’Sullivan

Treasurer: Paul Hughes

Committee Members: Barry O’Reilly, Maeve Whelan, Su Sarma, Gerry Agnew, Patricia Malone, Mary Jacob, Mark Skehan, Paul Byrne, Tom Creagh,

**Annual Review**

The CFI continued to grow from strength to strength in 2014. Dr. Declan Keane stepped down as chairman after the most successful 4 years in the history of the CFI and after leading the organisation of the hugely successful IUGA meeting in Dublin May 2013. Dr. Orfhlaith O’Sullivan succeeded me as secretary, and Dr. Paul Hughes continued as Treasurer. After coming down from the lead-up to the IUGA meeting, it was time to focus on local and national issues. We organised a surgical meeting in Cork and a multi-disciplinary CFI study day in Maynooth in November. The CFI National Pelvic Floor Symposium was held in UCC and CUMH on April 11th. It was the first time we had advertised this meeting internationally and we had interest from the UK. Professor Linda Cardozo and Professor Tony Smith came to Cork and provided stimulation educational and surgical sessions. The Anatomy Lab in the Western Gateway Building in UCC assisted us in providing a fantastic morning of anatomy prosections, as well as surgical simulation so that attendees could really practice surgical skills in a first class set-up. We were then able to perform fresh cadaveric surgery before moving over to CUMH for lectures, live surgery and simulation for intravesical botox injections. We hosted consultants and trainees from all over, but there was a particularly good turnout from our colleagues in the North of Ireland, reflecting the truly national nature of our group. The feedback was excellent and many thanks to all who gave talks, assisted at anatomy prosections and facilitated in the running of the day, especially Michael Cronin and his team at UCC. I also wish to thank all the companies who sponsored this event, as well as providing simulation equipment, kits and sutures. Attached is the programme for the day.

We had several teleconferences leading up to the CFI Annual Study Day held at Carton House, Maynooth. The line-up for the day was truly multi-disciplinary, with talks covering faecal, urinary and sexual dysfunction, and the physiotherapy approach to chronic pelvic pain. Trainees presented original research, and all the Basic Specialty Trainees in the country were invited to attend free of charge. We had a large number of physiotherapists and nurse specialists as well as doctors, who travelled from all over the country for the meeting. A highly enjoyable, educational and interactive day was had by all. Once more I wish to thank all those who made it such a special day, including Conference Partners and our sponsors, as well as the hardworking committee.

Other significant developments during the year include overhauling of our website. Thanks to Orfhlaith O’Sullivan for all her work on this and to Shinebox for their expertise in producing a useful, interactive and attractive website. We also collaberated with the British Society of Urogynaecologists (BSUG) and got CFI to host their surgical database which went live at the end of 2014. This allows surgeons access to a robust surgical database which collects data and follow up on operations and protects surgeons and their patients, allowing transparent and easily measurable data on procedures and outcomes. Many thanks to Barry O’Reilly and Declan Keane for their hard work.

Dr. Costi Durnea was awarded his PhD and acknowledges the CFI for the support he received that supported him throughout his research. He has had multiple international presentations and his work has been published, and is recognised as seminal in terms of new and unexpected findings in women before and after childbirth.

Our aims for next year include organising the CFI part of the Irish Congress of Obstetrics and Gynaecology in Dublin in 2015. Professor Bob Freeman, president of IUGA and Professor Chris Maher from Brisbane have agreed to teach and lecture at this meeting, providing the most up to date evidence and research to our colleagues and trainees all over the country and we really look forward to seeing them next year.

We are looking at dates for our surgical meeting also, and are looking forward to expanding on our website, and allowing the public access to more information about treatments and contact details for women with pelvic floor dysfunction. We hope to be able to support further research into this field and will be open to deserving projects relevant to our field.

We also wish to encourage the use of, and access to the Surgical Database as our foundations is the first in the country to introduce this level of best practice in our specialties.

Once more, I would like to thank the committee members for their support and hard work. I wish to thank colleagues in the pharmaceutical and medical devices industries for their support and sponsorship of our meetings. This allows access to such meetings at a heavily subsidised rate as well as allowing us to allocate funds for researchers and projects that aim to improve the quality of life of people with pelvic floor disorders and incontinence.

Suzanne O’Sullivan MB, MRCOG,FRCPI

Consultant Obstetrician and Urogynaecologist, CUMH

Chair Continence Foundation of Ireland