

#SundayWiMIN 23 Week 25: Dr Bairbre McNicholas

I am a medical intensivist and nephrologist with basic science training in immunology, having completed a Ph.D. and post-doctoral and nephrology training in Ireland and at the University of Washington, Seattle respectively. I completed a post certificate of specialist training fellowship in Intensive Care Medicine in 2018. I currently practice as a consultant Intensivist and Nephrologist at Galway University Hospitals. I am deputy chair of the Irish Critical Care Trials Group Executive Committee, a senior clinical lecturer at University of Galway, School of Medicine and is active in both clinical and translational research. My research has spanned basic and clinical investigations and have been principal investigator or site-PI on several COVID and non-COVID related clinical trials. I am a member of a study group using a prospective meta-trial methodology used to expedite clinical trials during pandemics. I have contributed to a working group on the application of awake prone positioning as treatment strategy for COVID-19 in low and medium income countries. In addition to clinical commitments, I study inflammation and immune tolerance in sepsis and patients with COVID-19 and from this established a biorepository of specimens on patients who were admitted and managed with COVID-19 at Galway University Hospital and am site lead for the National Irish COVID biobank. I am a member of the Irish Critical Care Trials Group Executive Committee, which endorses and, coordinates multi-center critical care studies in Ireland. I am a programme Director of the Acute Kidney Injury ESICM e-learning pathways and an editorial fellow at the lead nephrology journal JASN and from June 2023 will be an associated editor for Nephrology, Dialysis and Transplantation. I am CRRT lead for the Health Service Executive Acute Operations Critical Care Medical Device working group. Like most people in Galway, I love open water swimming as well as running and cycling. I haven't done a triathlon since I had children- hoping to do so someday. I am a native Irish speaker, as I come from Connemara. I am a member of the Scoil Fhursa golf fund-raising committee although I don't play golf and am also a member of St James Bushy Park Parish council.

As a final point, for those still reading, is my role as a mother- an aspect of me that has defined my progress as woman in medicine. I have three children that I adore and who are still excited when I come in the door in the evening. I have a strong childcare network, including an incredibly supportive husband, in laws a fabulous nanny and Connemara grandparents that help me look after them so I can work. Even with all this, particularly after coming back from the US, I never envisaged the struggle it would be being a mother and work to the extent that I want to, without the results that I would have gotten before them. Everything is that bit compromised from lack of focus- my mind is always on three things- work, children and house (or what's the state of it!). This pull in all directions has been picked up by grant reviewers ('has she been on maternity leave to explain lack of output'), programme directors ('you're on the thin end of the wedge' after having my 2nd child). Despite my distraction, I think I still have something to offer and am lucky to have had the opportunities to do them (albeit in a mostly reactive manner) and for those thinking about having children, they are absolutely worth it.