

#SundayWiMIN23 Week 20: Dr Saema Saeed

"I am a Specialist Registrar in Emergency Medicine, currently working in Tallaght University Hospital.

Born and raised in Abu Dhabi, I graduated from Dow University of Health Sciences in Pakistan. My initial interest in medicine came from my brother's need to have a kidney transplant; having worked in renal and intensive care medicine as an SHO, I moved to Ireland in 2017, with the intention of pursuing a career in these specialties.

However, my first Irish job landed me in Cork in Emergency Medicine and then there was no turning back. I was fortunate to be exposed to the Emergency Medicine Network in Cork receiving my initial exposure at Mallow Local Injury Unit but quickly recognizing that the high-volume Emergency Department at CUH was the place for me. I have revelled in the high acuity, diversity of undifferentiated and interesting cases that have come through the doors of the ED and the teamwork and shared values I have experienced. I have been driven and inspired by those nurses and doctors who surround me in this environment, and I progressed to a senior registrar level during my relatively short time working at CUH ED. I quickly realised that I had fallen in love with the specialty, the department at Cork University Hospital, and the Rebel City which I now consider home.

Having applied to the Core Specialist Training Programme in Emergency Medicine in 2020, I discovered that it is not easy for international medical graduates to access training programs in Ireland. But I was fortunate enough to be working under a team of consultants and mentors who recognised the drive and passion I had for Emergency Medicine and supported my development on the alternative training pathway.

I passed both Membership and Fellowship exams from the Royal College of Emergency Medicine in a span of 4 years, in addition to obtaining a Post graduate Diploma in Medicine for the Older Person, as well as a Lean Sigma Blackbelt in Management.

Two years after failing to secure a spot in Core Specialist training, I secured a spot on the Advanced Specialist Training Program for Emergency Medicine through the side-entry route in 2022. This led to a move to the Big Smoke where I am currently working for the next year.

The fast-paced dynamic environment, the veritable smorgasbord of cases from children to frail elderly, the traumas, the teamwork, the coffee fuelled board rounds and the chance to get your 'hands dirty' with various procedures every shift are the reasons I love emergency medicine.

Trauma has always been a special interest of mine derived from having worked in the developing world. While working at CUH I have developed an interest in chest trauma, geriatric emergency medicine, pre-hospital emergency medicine and quality improvement. Working in Tallaght has expanded my interests to include Education and Simulation.

I am currently involved in multiple projects targeted at improving patient care pathways and developing educational resources for emergency medicine NCHDs. My work to date has included being the Lead for the National EDEL study for ITERN and developing two national clinical guidelines for Emergency Medicine. I am a member of the IAEM clinical guidelines committee and the Irish Trainee Emergency Research Network.

I am passionate about developing resources for trainees and non-trainees for both career progression and well-being, as well as providing support for those unable to get onto training schemes by improving access to alternative training pathways, having been through that journey myself.

In my spare time, I like to hit the beaches in West Cork and catch up on my ever-expanding book list and mobster movies, as well as work on my Irish slang. I'm an above average cook (much to my mother's surprise) and can make eggs 20 ways. I might be the only Emergency physician in Ireland who does not drink coffee (much to the chagrin of my colleagues). Versed in Urdu and Arabic, I am planning on taking Irish Language lessons. I love to network and meet new people. Did I mention I love all things Cork!"