

[#SundayWiMIN23](#) Week 41: Rachel Madden

Rachel Madden is a fourth year medical student at Trinity College Dublin.

Originally from Kilkenny, Rachel knew from a young age that she wanted to be a doctor. Growing up she was actively involved in musical theatre, and worked for a couple of years in a variety of roles within the arts before commencing her medical degree. During this time, she developed a passion for working with children and adults with intellectual disabilities, an interest which reinforced her desire to study medicine.

Rachel's main clinical interests lie in ophthalmology and gerontology. She was first exposed to the world of clinical research during her second year of medical school when she was part of a project investigating the effects of Covid-19-related visiting restrictions on patient loneliness. This research was recently published in the Irish Medical Journal and serves to highlight the importance of limiting visitor restrictions insofar as is safe, in addition to supporting patients to maintain contact with their friends and family through the use of technology if visitor restrictions do need to be implemented.

In 2023, Rachel was awarded a Health Research Board Summer Student Scholarship to carry out research into markers of blood pressure instability and their association with falls, faints and dizziness amongst older people. This research examined data from the Falls and Syncope Unit in St James' Hospital, Dublin to look for potential predictors of further falls as seen on 24 hour ambulatory blood pressure monitoring. Rachel was delighted to present this research at the Irish Gerontological Society's Conference in September of this year, for which she received the President's Award. This is a prize awarded to the top five oral presentations over the course of the conference, and is a huge honour for a medical student to receive.

Rachel has loved being one half of the creative team behind TCD Paediatric Society's annual Teddy Bear Hospital since 2021. Teddy Bear Hospital is an initiative which aims to make hospital BEARable for young children, by exposing them to the equipment used in healthcare settings in a fun and non-threatening way. Children and families who attend Teddy Bear Hospital undergo intensive training, first learning about how the body and the immune system works, before learning how to scrub in to perform surgery on Surgery Teddy! After a very busy morning, children go home as fully qualified Teddy Doctors. Teddy Bear Hospital is a fundraising event for Bumbleance, Ireland's Children's Ambulance Service, with over 300 children and their families attending each year.

Outside of medicine, Rachel's hobbies include singing and musical theatre. She is a recent convert to yoga, which she loves as it brings some much needed yin back into a busy study schedule