

# COBMS Newsletter

## Welcome to the COB-MS Trial

Thank you very much for taking part in this study. The aim of our research is to find out if the therapy we have developed is effective at helping people with Multiple Sclerosis manage any cognitive problems they have as a result of the illness.

This newsletter is being sent to all the participants in the trial and the content we will share in this will be connected to multiple sclerosis. One thing which won't be in it is any discussion of the therapy. The reason is the trial has two groups, Group "A" which is getting the therapy now, and Group "B" which will get the therapy once the trial is complete. We have prepared a video about how participants have been randomly allocated to these two groups [here](#), and the People's Trial have one too (you can see it [here](#)).

This Newsletter is for you, the Participants. We have some interesting interviews planned, the first is with Fionnuala, who you will all be meeting over the course of the Trial. There are also plans to write about other MS studies in Ireland; the importance of research; and why we do it. In each issue, we would like to answer a question or questions from you, the participants. You can e-mail them to [robert.joyce@nuigalway.ie](mailto:robert.joyce@nuigalway.ie). We won't be sharing who asked the question, and we might amalgamate a few questions into one.

**1**

### TRIAL STATUS

The recruitment phase has finished and we are now treating PwMS with the therapy.

**2**

### KEY STATISTIC

The study has recruited 120 people with MS around Ireland.

**3**

### INTERESTING FACT

Donegal has the highest incidence of MS in Ireland.<sup>1</sup>

## What is Randomisation



Check our video [here](#)

## Want to learn more about the Research Process?



[The People's Trial](#) have a good overview.

## MS Research



Dr Una FitzGerald is conducting research on Progressive MS in Galway (Click [here](#))

## Interview - Fionnuala Rogers

Fionnuala will be meeting everyone who is taking part in the study

Fionnuala is part of the COB-MS Team and is the subject of our first interview. As she is the person you will meet for the before and after testing for the trial. We asked Fionnuala a few questions.

**Where are you from?**

I was born in Galway.

**“This study is preparing the way for a new treatment for cognitive problems found in people with MS”**

**What is your specialty, and why did you choose it?**

After completing my degree in Psychology, I chose to do my Masters in Cognitive Neuropsychology. I am fascinated in how this field attempts to bridge the gap between what



makes us "human" and our underlying brain structures.

**Is there something you do which nobody would realise?**

I love music. I play the piano recreationally.

**What is your favourite book/film?**

My favourite film is "Little Miss Sunshine" - I think it's one of the most underrated films of all time...

**Is there something you would love to do/see, and why?**

I've always had a bit of the travel bug. I spent two years living in Australia and travelling around Japan and New Zealand. I would love to get back on the road eventually, and spend a few months soaking up the culture in South East Asia (as soon as it's safe to travel again!).

## MS RESEARCH IN NUIG

Dr. Una FitzGerald is the head of an MS Research Group in NUIG. Last year the group was successful in getting €3.9 million to train researchers in developing new treatments for progressive MS.

The researchers are from Denmark, Germany, Belgium, France, Italy, Spain and the Czech Republic and the aim to develop novel devices and treatments to help people with advanced MS. It is hoped there will be 15 projects funded and they will cover biomaterials, neuroimmunology, stem cell biology, neurological disease, biomarkers, computer modelling of cerebrospinal fluid flow and medical device design.



# What is Randomisation

## Finding the best way to test if a new therapy works

Before we started recruiting for COB-MS we developed a video to explain this concept. It is one of the key legs of our trial and it is a process we hope to explain to everyone involved in the trial. Our video can be found [here](#).

Another trial, The People's Trial, (see [www.peoplestrial.ie](http://www.peoplestrial.ie)) has now finished. It was a small online trial and was conducted by researchers in NUIG. They too created a great video about Randomisation and you can view it [here](https://thepeoplestrial.ie/phase-four/).

We want to have two groups of people with MS which are as close to identical as possible. One of these groups will receive the therapy, and the other doesn't until after the study is finished. We will be testing both groups before we start, to create a baseline. This will be completed by Eimear & Fionnuala. When Group A finishes receiving the treatment Fionnuala will test both groups again. This testing will happen at different stages throughout the trial.

Group B (the Control Group) will not receive the therapy and so should reflect what would happen to the cognition of the average person with MS if they just continue life with no changes. We believe Group A will have a better cognitive outcome than Group B. If this happens, it will indicate the trial therapy is effective. If there is no difference between the two - or people are worse in Group A, it would suggest the therapy doesn't work, or has a negative effect.

In our trial once the testing period has finished, everyone in Group B will receive the therapy too, free of charge. It is a 'thank you' for taking part. Both groups in this trial are

## The COB-MS Team

### Principal Investigator

Dr Sinead Hynes

### Post Doctoral Researcher

Dr Christopher Dwyer

### Assistant Researchers

Eimear Bane

Robert Joyce

Anusha Moses

Fionnuala Rogers

## Contact Details

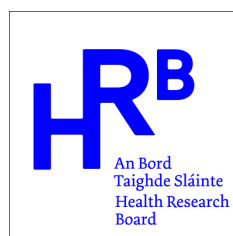
**Phone:** 087-4491154

**E-Mail:** [cobms@nuigalway.ie](mailto:cobms@nuigalway.ie)

**Address:** Áras Moyola  
NUIG, Galway, Co. Galway

equally important, and staying the course is vital

## Sponsor



## Collaborators



Randomisation Image: "Brian Eno 77 Million Paintings" by Dominic's pics is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#)

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/49768158\\_Multiple\\_sclerosis\\_prevalence\\_in\\_Ireland\\_Relation\\_ship\\_to\\_vitamin\\_D\\_status\\_and\\_HLA\\_genotype](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/49768158_Multiple_sclerosis_prevalence_in_Ireland_Relation_ship_to_vitamin_D_status_and_HLA_genotype)