



# Year in Review: Our Programs in Practice

## SCHOLAR EXCHANGE

**Professor Patrick Johnston, Chair**

The Scholar Exchange Working Group (SE WG) was originally established as a separate working group charged with expanding the number of skilled cancer professionals on the island of Ireland through improved training and education. Given the cross-cutting need for human resource development across the continuum of cancer, the activities of the SE WG have cut across each of the Working Groups, becoming part of each of their activities.

The Consortium, which is funded by the HRB, the Health and Social Care Research and Development (HSC R&D) Office, and the NCI, facilitates and promotes a number of scholar exchange opportunities each year, from clinical trials training for nurses to cancer prevention fellowships and programs. In partnership with the NCI, the Consortium provides fellowship awards to qualified island of Ireland nurses, oncologists, researchers, and other professionals to travel, study, and conduct research in Ireland, Northern Ireland, and the U.S. In addition, the Consortium provides opportunities for Irish, Northern Irish, and American scholars and researchers to engage in cross-border activities, such as the All-Ireland Health Economics Workshop. The NCI organized this workshop to encourage participants to share and exchange

information regarding health economics and policy research. This meeting opened the door to collaborative discussion between all-Ireland scholars and NCI health service researchers on the respective national contexts associated with policy questions, healthcare service organization, and data sources.

Collectively, these opportunities continue to bring the Consortium closer to the goal of enhancing the cancer knowledge base and promoting improved cancer care through research on the island of Ireland.

## CANCER REGISTRIES/ EPIDEMIOLOGY

**Dr. Anna Gavin, Chair**

The Cancer Registries Working Group (CR WG) consists of members from the Consortium's three partnering jurisdictions. The Consortium Board of Directors established the CR WG to coordinate collaborations between the cancer registries of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The CR WG is also dedicated to training and furthering the education of cancer epidemiologists. Toward this end, the CR WG aims to develop joint programs to help researchers gain a better understanding of cancer rates, trends, and outcomes across the island of Ireland. In 2007, the Ireland and Northern Ireland cancer registries continued to cooperate on a number of projects, which are summarized below.

## ■ 3<sup>RD</sup> ALL-IRELAND CANCER STATISTICS REPORT

A postdoctoral statistician working for the Northern Ireland Cancer Registry (NICR) was selected to complete the 3<sup>rd</sup> All-Ireland Cancer Statistics Report. During 2007, all-Ireland cancer data was collected and data analysis will be conducted for the report due at the end of 2008.

## ■ IRELAND-NORTHERN IRELAND COOPERATION RESEARCH PROJECT GRANT

Since August 2005, the research project grant entitled, "Factors underlying differences and trends in prostate-specific antigen (PSA) testing, biopsy and prostate cancer incidence in Ireland 1994-2003" has been funded jointly by the HRB and the DHSSPS in Northern Ireland. The NCRI and the NICR continued to collaborate on this project in order to investigate the varying prostate cancer incidence trends in Ireland and Northern Ireland. Major project milestones accomplished in Ireland and Northern Ireland during 2007 are summarized below.